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SIXTEEN MONTHS

AT THE

GOLD DIGGINGS.

BY

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PREFACE.

It is almost inconceivable what an excitement was produced upon nations and individuals by the discovery, less than four years since, of gold among the mountains of Upper California. Tides of human life soon set in toward this one point; currents here met, whirling and contending with increasing force; and, where all was silent and calm before, was heard the roar, and seen the violence and agitation of the maelstrom.

The writer was for sixteen months employed in the gold mines, chiefly upon the American and Tuolumne Rivers and their tributaries. His reasons for compiling his notes and presenting them to the public may be briefly stated. It was the request of several friends that he would keep a journal of his mining life, exhibiting its lights and shades, its fortunes and misfortunes. This he did, jotting down from day to day the incidents as they occurred. Many mining companions, aware of this fact, requested him to prepare his journal for the press, that their friends might thus have a view of their circumstances and employments.

Having so long been a miner, and acquainted with all his privations and sufferings; having experienced his elation at success and his depression at failure; having passed through the trying season of acclimation, and lain once beneath a lone oak, expecting, as he looked up to the stars shining clear above him, there to end his days; having rocked the gold-digger's cradle, wielded his pick and spade, messed and slept with miners, he is prepared to present a correct view of his subject for those who have friends at the mines.

He considers that it will be proper to present incidents of travel on his journey to California, in connection with the more important object, both to afford a view of the dangers and difficulties of the earlier emigrants to this country, and also to maintain the unity of his plan.

He hopes to make this little volume useful to those who are, or who expect to be, engaged in the arduous employments of mining. If any shall be encouraged to perseverance—especially if any young men who shall be thus thrown into circumstances where immorality and vice are so prevalent, and to which many give themselves up too easy victims, shall be put upon their guard, his best wishes will have been accomplished. He recalls, with sadness, the case of a merchant of education and refinement, who left a large circle of friends and a young family. With bright hopes he started for the gold placers. Disheartened by several failures, depressed at his separation from his family, he sought in the social cup to forget his sorrows and disappointments. Within three months from the time he arrived in the country he became a subject of *mania a potu*, and died in the streets of San Francisco. The path of vice in California lies not through the ordinary influences of life; it leads not, as elsewhere, through a long course. It lies rather on an inclined plane, and speedily runs down into despair and ruin.

I intend to make this volume a miner's manual, in which he may find important directions relating to the various mining operations.

Another motive with the writer is the desire to induce all who are doing *well enough*, who are living within their means and laying by a little, to remain satisfied at home. The question is often asked, *Who should go to the mines?* It is very sure that a man with a family depending upon his daily efforts should not go. He should not exhaust his slender means, and run himself in debt, with the hope of making himself independent in one or two years. Let such a one, who is inclined to do this, picture to himself his wife struggling alone with poverty or sickness, his children left without a father's presence and love to guide and protect, and himself a homeless wanderer, subjected to the privations, hardships, and sickness incident to such a vagrant life.

Let the young man go, if he will, who has no family depending upon him—who has a strong constitution, and stronger moral courage; who is sober and persevering; who has little prospect of making a comfortable living at home, and who can make up his mind to spend five years from it, and to enjoy as few comforts as did Diogenes. To such a one there may be some comfort in even a miner's life. He has not, like the man of family in a similar condition, to experience how much the heart can bear and not break—to live only in the future, while he

> "Drags at each remove a lengthening chain."

His is not the history of an *exile heart*. He may enjoy the rest of the laboring man beneath God's own glorious canopy. The hardships which he endures in this, the *gold-age* of his life, may make him more satisfied with his situation when he returns home, while the troubles which once annoyed him will not there be experienced.

DANIEL B. WOODS.

Philadelphia, July 1, 1851.

SOUTH END.

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CHAPTER I.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY.

California extends from Oregon to Sonoma and Lower California, and from the Rocky Mountains to the Pacific. It shows a coast-front extending ten degrees of latitude, from the thirty-second to the forty-second parallel. To the voyager it presents only high and forbidding headlands — mountain ranges which step down from the broad table-lands in the interior, and push a bold foot far out into the waters of the ocean.

This country possesses 420,000 square miles, and is remarkable for its lofty ranges of mountains, among which lie interspersed limited but beautiful valleys and more extensive plains. Its diversity of climate and soil is as great as the varieties of its surface.

The channel which forms the entrance into this singular country from the Pacific is two miles in width and three in length, and is opposite, under the same parallel of latitude, to the Straits of Gibraltar.

After passing through this channel, the lowest of the series of bays, that of San Francisco, opens broadly before you, dotted with several islands clothed with verdure, and rocks white with their coating of guano, around and upon which hover and settle immense flocks of sea-fowls. Above the ranges of hills, in the east, rises the distant Sierra, crowned till July with its winter snows. The bay opposite the city is twelve miles wide, and, with the bays above, contains anchorage ground sufficient to accommodate every vessel, from the ship of war down to the schooner, in the whole world. In the north, the bay contracts into a narrow passage, and opens soon into a second spacious bay, ten miles in diameter. Still another strait connects this bay with a third, containing numerous islands, and receiving, at its head, the waters of the Sacramento and the San Joaquin. These, with the Colorado, are the principal rivers of California.

The mountain ranges may be briefly described. Fifty miles from the barren and sandy shore of the Pacific, and running parallel with it, is the coast-range, well defined, but not so elevated as the other more remarkable range. This is the Sierra Nevada, or Snowy Range, which bears its lofty peaks, covered even into summer with snow, far into the sky. This range is one hundred and fifty miles farther inland, and also runs parallel with the coast.

Within all this lies the available portion of California, which consists of several fertile valleys, among which I shall notice particularly those of San Juan, and of the Sacramento and San Joaquin. The former is of limited extent, being not more than twenty miles long by twelve wide, but of great fertility. This may be regarded as the garden of California. There can not be found a more salubrious or more equable climate in any part of the world. It is said to resemble that of Andalusia, in Spain. This valley is situated between the coast-range and the Pacific, and extends from the Bay of San Francisco north and south.

The valley of the Sacramento and the San Joaquin lies between the coast-range and the Sierra Nevada. It may be considered as one continuous valley, the two rivers uniting their waters at the head of the bays. It extends in length from about the forty-first parallel of latitude, three hundred miles to the delta of the Sacramento, and thence to the head waters of the San Joaquin. Over this whole region is found scattered the evergreen oak, resembling the trees of an old apple-orchard, and upon the ridges grows the red-wood. A fine growth of pine is found among the mountains.

All the tributaries of the Sacramento and the San Joaquin rise among the Sierra Nevada. It is of importance to have the position of these well understood. The first branch worthy of note in descending the Sacramento is called Feather River. Bear Creek and the Yuba are streams emptying into this river. The American River is another branch of the Sacramento, fed by those streams named North, Middle, and South Forks. In proceeding south up the San Joaquin, the Stanislaus is the first river of note. The next branch is the Tuolumne, and then the Merced—the Rio de los Mercedes of Old California, and abbreviated into Mercey by the miners. Higher up are the Marepoosa, King's, and some smaller rivers. All these are rapid, clear mountain streams, containing abundant supplies of the finest salmon. The Sacramento and the San Joaquin have no tributaries on the lower or western side.

Still within these interior limits last described lies a comparatively narrow belt of land, difficult of access, guarded by a thousand dangers and privations, yet possessing all the extraordinary and magical influence of Aladdin's cave, and realizing our boyhood's dreams when we filled our hats with the shining coins. This—the heart of the country—is the true, the mysterious *California*—the shrine at which tens of thousands of weary and exile pilgrims do homage, and where already great multitudes have left their bones. This is *California*—the country lately an uninviting wilderness, where the Indian and the bear disputed possession, now, all along its streams, upon its bars, in its gulches and ravines, covered with the tented home of the miner, while its hill sides echo back ten thousand eager voices, the din of innumerable picks and shovels, and the scraping and grating sounds of a thousand cradles incessantly rocked, emptied, and refilled.

Let us attempt a description.

Between the Sierra Nevada on the east, and the Sacramento and San Joaquin on the west, and at about twenty-five miles distance from both, are the foot or lower hills of the Nevada. These foot-hills embrace, or rather constitute, the gold region. They are perfectly defined upon the lower side, where they rise abruptly from the level plain below. Upon the upper side they are irregular, often running up toward the mountains, and rising to an elevation of three or four thousand feet. This belt of land is five hundred miles in length and fifty in width. It is traversed by the tributaries of the Sacramento and the San Joaquin which have been mentioned. These streams, rising in the Sierra Nevada, and flowing west, cut their channels through these foot-hills. They also receive, in their progress, the arroyos from a thousand springs, which burst out over all this enchanted region. These creeks and rivulets, sometimes gliding smoothly along to their meeting, and sometimes becoming impetuous mountain torrents, form the world-renowned ravines and gulches of the California gold diggings. During the prevalence of some great freshet, or other cause sufficient to produce such an effect, these streams are sometimes pushed out of their former channels, which instead are filled up, sometimes to the depth of thirty or even forty feet, with a loose foreign soil. Such placers constitute many and the most important of the "dry diggings," which sometimes spread themselves out over valleys to some considerable extent, and were doubtless formed by washings from the hills in the vicinity.

The "river diggings" include the bars and auriferous portions of the channels of the tributaries of the Sacramento and San Joaquin, during their passage through the foot-hills.

Though the broad belt of ground which has been here described is named the gold region, it is by no means to be supposed that the precious metal is found equally distributed over its surface, as if it had rained down, or been thrown broadcast by some volcanic action over the whole country. The placers where the auriferous dust is found are, in comparison with the whole extent of the country so named, exceedingly limited. The miner often travels many miles over this region—he wanders for days along its river banks and over its bars, and turns aside into some of its numerous ravines—he often pauses to examine spots which appear to him favorable, and with his pick, shovel, and knife—always his companions—digs his fifty holes, testing each with his pan, without success. And even when he comes to the favored bar or placer from which many pounds of gold may have been taken, there is perhaps one chance in fifty in favor of his collecting any considerable amount of gold. Upon these very localities thousands of industrious miners barely make their living. The hopeful miner eagerly hastens, with high expectations, to the diggings. He chooses his bar, and marks off a claim; this he faithfully "prospects," then abandons it for another and another, till he comes to the conclusion that the whole business is a lottery.

The primitive formations prevailing through the gold diggings are the soft granite and the talcose slate. The superstrata are various, and depend upon the formations in the hills adjoining. The first in importance, as being intimately combined with the gold, is the quartz. This is found in broken fragments, from the fine pebbles to the huge masses, over the whole surface of the country. It is often seen crowning the hill-tops, and sometimes is found in veins in the valleys. There can be no doubt that the quartz and the gold were formed in combination.

This is now so universally admitted as not to require to be substantiated. It is also placed beyond a doubt that the gold of the mines has been attrited, and taken to the various deposits by the action of water; and the gold is found in coarser or finer particles, according as it is exposed to a greater or less degree of this action. In some cases, the gold has been found running in veins, more or less rich, through the quartz, and so closely combined that they must be reduced to powder before they can be separated. With but few exceptions, however, the working of these veins has not proved profitable.

Perhaps there is no part of my whole subject so difficult to be described as the climate of California. One cause of this is, that it is so different in various parts of the state, and in the same part during the various seasons. In general there are two seasons—a wet and a dry. The first commences about the middle of October, and continues to the first or middle of April. It must not be supposed that there is rain continually during this season. My journal exhibits the following statistical results:

In October, 1849, it rained two days—the 9th and 10th.

In November, 1849, it rained fourteen days—cloudy three days.

In December, 1849, it rained eight days—cloudy three days, and snow one day.

In January, 1850, it rained seventeen days—cloudy one day, and snow three days.

In February, 1850, it rained four days—cloudy three days, and snow three days.

In March, 1850, it rained nine days—cloudy three days, and snow one day.

In April, 1850, it rained one day—April 5th.

During the months of October, November, and December, 1849, and of January, 1850, the mean average temperature indicated by the thermometer was as follows:

At sunrise, 36°.
At noon, 50°.
Lowest at sunrise, 23°.
Highest at sunrise, 48°.
Lowest at noon, 40°.
Highest at noon, 50°.
In February, 1850, in the morning, 36°.
" " " at noon, 62°.
In March, at morning, 39°.
" " at noon, 58°.

The Hon. T. Butler King estimates, in his report to government, that the soil west of the Sierra Nevada covers an area of between fifty and sixty thousand square miles, and is capable of supporting a population equal to that of Ohio or New York at the present time. A large portion of this land, although fertile, can not be cultivated, owing to the drought. The portion of the soil capable of irrigation is comparatively small, and lies upon the rivers and streams.

The products of this state are various. The climate and soil are well suited to the cultivation of wheat, rye, barley, and oats, the last of which grows spontaneously over the whole length of the sea-coast, and for many miles into the interior. Irish potatoes, turnips, onions, and beets are produced in great perfection. The various fruits are cultivated with facility.

It is not the design of this work to give a history of California previous to the discovery of its gold. But it may be proper, in connection with the geography of the country, to present a brief history of the mines and the operations of the miners.

In the spring of the year 1848, Mr. Suter employed two men to make an exploring tour along the branches of the American River, where it passes through the foot-hills already described, to find a growth of pine timber, and a suitable site for a mill for sawing it into boards. The site and the timber were found upon the south branch of that river. Little dreamed those day-laborers, as they broke ground for their rude mill, in that solitary wilderness, that the results of that day's labor would give employment to thousands and tens of thousands of such implements as they then used; that the one spadeful of red dirt, at wheih they gazed so intently, at the bottom of which a few yellow bits of shining dust appeared, was soon to exert a mysterious, a profound influence upon the commerce, the welfare, the destinies of the whole human family. An influence was about to go forth from that narrow ditch which would return again, and bring with it an innumerable multitude, thronging from every quarter of the world, overcoming all difficulties, bringing with them their houses and supplies, and spreading themselves over the hills and valleys of this country. That moment was an epoch in the world's history. It was the discovery of GOLD; and, which is of far more importance, it was the *planting of the* ANGLO-SAXON *upon the shores of the Pacific.*

At this time California contained but fifteen thousand people. The belt of gold country was comparatively uninhabited, and entirely without supplies of provisions, except such as might be procured by the rifle of the hunter, and as entirely destitute of shelter. In a few weeks after the 1st of June, 1848, it is estimated that there were five thousand miners. As they came generally without provisions, these commanded an exorbitant price. At the time Rev. Alcalde Colton visited the mines, which was some time after the discovery, flour sold for $4 the pound, sugar and coffee at $4, a tin pan $6, laudanum $1 the drop, rum $20 a quart, and picks sold at $18 each. It was not until the summer and fall of 1849 that the American emigration began to arrive. They came across the plains, through Mexico, by the Isthmus, and around the Horn; and before the winter it was calculated that there were fifty thousand engaged in this business. During this season the miners extended themselves along many of the streams and through many of the ravines of the gold region. The provisions were scanty and unsuitable. Very few vegetables, and little fresh meat, were to be purchased at any price. Flour and pork were the staples, which were sold at $1 the pound till the rainy season commenced, when they sold for $2. A few bottles of pickles which reached the mines were sold at $6 and

$8 the bottle. In the winter good boots brought $96, and ordinary $32 and $64.

The year 1850 opened more favorably in the supplies furnished at the mines. It was estimated by Mr. King, who wrote at that time, that during the year there would be one hundred thousand miners employed. Many of them had built themselves comfortable log or stone houses—provisions were more abundant, and at lower rates. Vegetables, fresh meats, and fish were constantly supplied, many of them from the vicinity of the mines.

It will be perceived that the statistics which I have prepared of the profits of mining differs essentially from other published tables. I have only to say in defense of my own, that they are the result of the most careful observation and inquiry during sixteen months' residence in the mines. They are furnished by individuals most of whom have given their names and residences in connection with the results of their labors. The table presents the average profits in their most favorable aspect, being furnished by a class of industrious and persevering miners. The winter averages of fifty-six miners in the best of the southern diggings is $3 26 for each day to each miner.

The summer averages were based upon the operations of mining companies located upon the most profitable bars of the Tuolumne, and furnished in every case but one by the secretaries of those companies. The table gives the result of thirty-five thousand eight hundred and seventy-six working days, which was bullion valued at $113,633 95, or an average of $3 16 for each day's labor to each man.

Hon. T. Butler King, in his report to government, gives the average as $16 per diem. It is a question of some importance which of these is the correct estimate. Let us present the aggregate amount of gold taken out of all the California mines during the year, according to both estimates. According to that of Senator King, and allowing the year to have three hundred and thirteen working days, the one hundred thousand miners would give the sum total of $500,800,000, or over half a billion dollars yearly, while the average sum would be $5008 to each miner. The other estimate would average $1004 73, and present the total profits of the mines for the year as $100,473,000. One would think that the rest of the world should be satisfied with having picked from the pockets of this old California miser who has hoarded his treasures so long, nearly a hundred million of dollars in one year! Half a billion! that would be taking too much!

Not only is the digging of gold the most uncertain of all employments, it is also one in which science and all past experience are at fault. No rules can be given, no evidences furnished for finding the concealed veins or opening the rich deposits. The miner is not sure of his gold till he holds it in his hand, and then it seems very difficult for him to hold on to it. One of our coins is very properly denominated the eagle, since it seems endued with wings, and is so apt to fly away.

SOUTH END.

CHAPTER II.

VOYAGE TO CALIFORNIA.

On the 1st of February, 1849, we embarked, at the foot of Arch Street, Philadelphia, on board the barque Thomas Walters, under command of Captain Marshman, for Tampico, thence intending to cross Mexico, and, re-embarking at Mazatlan, to proceed up the Pacific coast to San Francisco. Our company consisted of about forty persons, known as the Camargo Company. There were among them men from all the professions and pursuits in life—young and old, grave and gay, married and unmarried.

After the usual amount of adventures, sea-sickness, and home-sickness, we arrived at Tampico on the 21st of February, where we were most happy to exchange the monotony, the junk and other salt provisions, and the green waves of a sea life, for the pleasing variety, the delicious fruits and vegetables, and the beautiful fields of a tropical climate.

We must take our readers with us, first to the theatre of Tampico, where we went, not as spectators, but as actors upon its boards. The first night after our arrival we appeared upon its stage, performing our parts in the celebrated farce, the California Gold Diggers—a play which has since been performed a thousand times, and with unabated interest. To explain myself, our quarters, while in the city, were in the old theatre, the various rooms of which we occupied as sleeping and eating apartments.

This city is pleasantly located upon an elevated promontory, being almost an island, having the River Panuco on the one side, and a lake upon the other. It contains about seven thousand inhabitants, many of whom are Americans. There are several large plazas or public squares, and some pleasant houses. The American consul, Captain Chase, took us to the spot where his heroic wife raised the American flag, and maintained it in spite of the threats of the Mexicans.

The furnishing of such a company as ours with all the horses and mules necessary for a journey of about eight hundred miles was not to be accomplished at once. On the morning of the 8th of March, and the fifteenth day after our arrival, we were mounted on "mustangs," a small and hardy horse, peculiarly adapted to the mountains over which we were to travel, our provisions and clothing being on the backs of mules. All being ready, we slowly filed out from the hacienda of Mr. Laffler, a large farmer from Ohio, who was under contract to supply us with animals to Mazatlan. We had spent some days here preparing for the march, and amusing ourselves in spearing fish, and in shooting deer and alligators, being ourselves likewise the sport of innumerable swarms of musquitoes, ticks, fleas, and jiggers. This latter insect, though very small, is the occasion, at times, of great inconvenience and suffering. These tropical insects handled us so cruelly, that we were compelled to write, eat, and sleep with gloves. To avoid them at night, I encased myself in a bag, made of cotton, which I drew up over my whole body, then bringing it around my head. This arrangement proved so much to my advantage that I continued it during the whole time of my absence.

Upon the march, a *Caballero*, mounted upon his mule, took the lead, followed by the whole train of draught mules and the attendants. Then came the guide and the company, sometimes drawn up, under our military captain, in regular order of march, and sometimes extended out over the trail as far as the eye could reach. We were advised to keep well together, and never to dispense with the night-guard, on account of the guerillas, who would ever be on the watch for an opportunity to attack us.

For several days our march lay across the level plains of the Tierra Caliente, the region of perpetual spring, and clothed with verdure. Having reached the foot-hills of the Sierra Madre, or Andes of Mexico, one day's travel brought us up into the temperate region. This was the lower table-land. The landscape was no longer gay with flowers, but abounded in immense forests. Here were found the varieties of the musquite, the stately cypress, and the banyan. The whole undergrowth was a thorny thicket, in which the prickly pear and the cactus predominated. After traveling a day over this region, we came to a valley, into which we descended, and where, in the midst of a fertile country, we entered Villa de Vallee. This town contains a cathedral in ruins, which, like those of many of the towns of Mexico, were partially destroyed at the time of the revolution, and have never since been repaired. One of the wings was occupied as a chapel, while the residence of the *Padre* was in a kind of shed behind.

A letter from Bishop Kendrick, of Philadelphia, which he kindly sent me as I was about leaving home, procured me every attention here. This general letter of introduction, written in the Latin language, gained for me much valuable information from the priests of Mexico. The assistance, and in some cases the protection, which it secured to our whole company, can not be overrated. It is as follows:

"Nos Franciscus Patricius Kendrick, Dei et Apostolicæ Sedis Gratia, Episcopus Philadelphiensis Universis has litteras inspecturis notum facimus et testamur Danielem B. Woods, in Statu Massachusetts natum, et per aliquot annos hujus urbis incolam, civem esse spectabilem moribus, et fama integra, quem suorum negotiorum causa alio migrantem, omnibus commendamus, ut si qua indiguerit opera amica, ea fruatur.

"In quorum fidem has litteras dedimus Philadelphiæ die XXX. mensis Januarii anno MDCCCXLIX.

"FRANCISCUS PATRICIUS, Ep. Phil."

Padre Calisti endorsed this letter in Spanish.

The houses of Villa de Vallee were of one story, and generally made of mud-bricks dried in the sun. The people seemed all poor and very indolent, the women, as is the case through Mexico, being far superior to the men in industry and intelligence. We remained here several days to have our animals shod, a necessary preparation for crossing the mountains.

The day before we left, the padre invited me to dine with him.

After the animals were made ready, we proceeded over the plains toward the mountains, some of the peaks of which we could see. Before we reached these we crossed the Tomwin River at a small town where we passed the night. The place for the entertainment of travelers was near the banks of the river, and late in the afternoon we walked out to the stream, where were gathered men, women, and children, floundering and bathing in the water. Nor was it long before several of our company were joining in their wild and gleeful sports.

For some time reports of a revolution in the country about us reached our ears, and hearing from some villagers that, if we kept on our course, we should meet the insurgents the next day, we concluded to turn aside at once into the mountains, though we should thus be compelled to ascend by a path which is seldom attempted. We were three days in climbing the mountains and clambering over the rocks—such as I hope not to see again. Its precipices were fearful. We would sometimes wind our way up or down the face of a mountain by paths cut in the side, over which a person might be let down many hundred feet by ropes. It was a volcanic country, and its conical peaks were surrounded for miles with scoria and pumice-stone, which tore the shoes from the feet of our animals, rendering it almost impossible to travel. This was a country fitted for the ladrones and guerillas. And the frequent crosses planted by the path told of murders which had been committed here, and where the traveler was, if so disposed, to offer up prayers for the repose of the souls of the murdered. We were cautioned to be on our guard, and to maintain a constant watch at night. But, notwithstanding such cautions, we were often tempted, for the sake of avoiding the dust, to travel in advance of the train. In company with a gentleman who was armed as well as myself, I started on, not expecting to meet our companions again till we halted for the night. We were about three miles in advance of the train, and, as we rode around the angle of a large rock near the path, six or seven men, who were lying there apparently watching for us, started suddenly to their feet and sprung to our side. Our guns were fortunately in our hands, and in a position that we could use them; we were also armed with revolvers and knives at our belts. Seeing that we were not intimidated by their violent gestures, but were calm and ready, they soon dropped behind us, and after a time disappeared. These robbers never attack travelers if every chance is not in their favor. A small party of five persons belonging to our company were placed in greater danger even than ours. They were traveling some days before us, and not far from this same spot. They had been warned at the last town that a party of twenty guerillas had gone out early in the morning for the purpose of attacking them. As they rode slowly on, they came in sight of the robbers, who had chosen well their positions, and were waiting for them. Five of the twenty-one robbers were stationed in the path, while the others were divided up into small gangs on each side and in the rear. All these were mounted but one, who was employed as a runner between the different parties. The Americans halted, newly capped their rifles and revolvers, and slowly proceeded on their way. With pale faces, but undaunted hearts, they rode up to the Mexicans, who, as they came on, retired and allowed them to pass. When they reached the summit of a hill a half mile distant, and looked back, the robbers were still in the same position. The knowledge, on their part, of the certainty, in case of an encounter, of the death of some of their number, daunted them.

At length we reached the summit of the tableland, eight thousand feet above the level of the sea, which spread out a vast plain before us, from which many lofty volcanic peaks sprung up, attaining to an elevation of fourteen thousand feet.

Excepting in the valleys, there is but little vegetation upon these plateaus. And we could not imagine where the supplies for the markets of the cities could be obtained. For several days our path lay through palm and palmetto groves. The parasol shade of their small tops was no shelter from the heat of the sun at noon, but rather increased its intensity. And the whole day long would come, screaming over us, the never-ending flocks of parrots. Their cry, to a weary traveler, is almost intolerable. The cactus, Mexico's national flower, and emblazoned upon her coat of arms, and stamped upon her coin, is found here in a thousand varieties. The beautiful flower itself is often three feet in height. After leaving these palm groves, we entered upon a very barren and desolate region. It was a desert of sand and dust, almost without water. Our mules would raise such a cloud of dust, especially if there was any wind, as to be nearly suffocating. The great elevation to which we had attained caused the most disagreeable sensations. On lying down at night, or rising in the morning, there would be a painful giddiness. The skin became parched and dry, and the spirits were oppressed. While traveling over this region, we were overtaken one day by a dust storm, which was as novel as it was oppressive. It was near night. We saw before us, which after a time spread out all around us, many wild whirlwinds which extended up into the sky, carrying with them apparently solid conical masses of clouds. We counted upward of sixty cones formed and forming at the same time. As the sun was setting, these extended at the top, opening something in the form of an umbrella, the cones still continuing to play up their heaving masses into its expanding bosom, which presented a most unearthly and terrific appearance. It was the *blackness of darkness*, which suddenly became illuminated by the lurid flashes of lightning darting through it, and forming a picture of that wrath which, we may suppose, broods and bursts over the bottomless pit. Suddenly its edges closed down around us, snatching away the remaining light of day, and shrouding us in darkness, like that of Egypt, through which we groped, calling and shouting to each other, yet not able to see a yard before us.

> "Eripiunt subito nubes cœlumque, diemque
> Teucrorum ex oculis; ponto nox incubat atra."

Again a rush was heard, which came nearer and more near, filling us with dread, till it struck us with the suddenness of a blow. It was as though all those cones had drawn closer and closer together, till they were piled into one consolidated mountain of dust, pressed down by the mass in the air upon our heads. For a time all our efforts to see or to speak were vain. We could hardly breathe. If we moved at all, it was by setting our backs against the elements and pushing with all our strength. There was not a drop of rain; it was a storm of dust—a *sirocco*. Fortunately for us, we were near the *meson*, which we entered after being half an hour exposed to its fury, and as it was abating. Every thing was penetrated by it, and it seemed as though water could not clean our eyes or our throats.

In the *mesons*, the various apartments for travelers, the stables, the eating-room, and all the offices, are built around a spacious paved court, upon which all the windows and doors open. A large gate forms the entrance, which is closed and bolted at night. The rooms for travelers, often twenty feet square, are entirely unfurnished. He is to supply his own bed and bedding, which he spreads out upon a floor which seems never to have been swept. For his meals he must go to the *fonda*, and order what he may choose or what they may have. One dish at a time is spread upon the bare table, which is often furnished with plates, but not often with knives, forks, or spoons. A variety of soups, made hot with red pepper, and a slice of bread, forms the first course. Then follows rice, with thin Indian cakes. Sometimes squash fried in lard is added. A favorite dessert is the Mexican custard, made of rice or chocolate. Coffee, wine, or *pulque*, a drink made of the maguey, closes the entertainment. There are distilleries in the country where the pulque is converted into a most hateful species of whisky.

In the morning the horses and mules are led out into the court, every preparation is made, and the travelers take their leave, throwing behind them their hasty adieus. These mesons in city and country are very filthy, and much infested with vermin. In one instance we saw a number of *Tarantulas*—the venomous black spider of the tropics—hanging upon the walls of our room after we had slept upon its floor.

On the 22d of March we entered San Luis Potosi. This is a large city, possessing considerable wealth. It is near the silver mines, and contains a mint.

We saw here, for the first time, a stage-coach. It was up for the city of Mexico, distant about three hundred miles, which journey is accomplished in six days, at an expense of $25 for a seat. The coach consists of a large unwieldy frame, upon which is swung the body, which is comparatively small.

The ignorance of the Mexicans is equal to their superstition. We were amused at an instance afforded us in the case of a schoolmaster. While describing to him the modes of traveling in America, we told him about the steamers, at which he was not much surprised, having heard of them before; but when we told him of the rail-road, he listened with the same incredulity with which the King of Siam heard the missionaries describe ice; but when we told him of the telegraph, he slowly arose, wrapped his *serapi* around him, and moved off, without deigning us a word or a look.

We were present at a cock-fight, one of the favorite amusements of the Mexicans in general, and of Santa Anna in particular. A low fence inclosed the pit, within which were the attendants exhibiting the game cocks, and the owners who were taking the bets of the spectators. Among these were several padres, always known by their peculiar dress. The crowd around exhibited no excitement. Gambling with the Mexicans is a regular pursuit, and not a means of diversion or excitement. There was no difference in their appearance, whether they were at church or at their cock-fights. After all the betting was done, long steel spears, made very sharp, and three inches in length, were fastened upon the legs of the cocks, and they were pitted to fight. In the first encounter, one cock thrust his spear into the breast of the other, which died very soon after. In the second, two fine cocks were pitted, and more interest than usual was felt and deeper betting elicited. In less than half a minute, one was lying dead, the spear of the other being thrust so far through his head that it was with difficulty withdrawn.

In one of our rambles through the city, we were accosted in the most remarkable manner by a well-dressed and beautiful sigñorita. She was seated at a window of one of the houses of the wealthy. As we caught her piercing black eye, she smiled a cordial greeting, to which one of the party responded by a respectful "Buenos dias, sigñorita!" Her reply was a terrible oath, and a most obscene expression in English, and yet there was that about her manner and tone which denoted that she meant to say that which was very civil and kind. We were told, when relating the incident afterward to an Englishman residing in the city, that some American soldiers very basely amused themselves, while pretending to teach the sigñoritas our language, by making them repeat just the expressions we had heard, and other similar ones, as forms of polite salutation.

We spent two days in the city to give rest to our animals, and then proceeded on our way toward Guadalaxara. Between these two cities the country is more uneven. The scenery is often very beautiful. We received many cautions to be on our guard, as we were to pass through a part of the country where many depredations and murders had been committed. We were told of travelers who had been suddenly dragged from their horses by the lasso, and murdered. One day we witnessed an instance of the surprising skill of the Mexicans in the use of the lasso. One of the horses threw his rider, and went galloping off across the plain. In a moment a muleteer had spurred his mule forward in pursuit, coiling up his rope as he went. Presently the coil darted through the air, and fell with unerring aim over the head of the horse, bringing him at once to a pause.

The most beautiful city we saw in Mexico was Santa Maria de los Lagos. Its cathedral was grand, towering high above its houses, and, as we rode through the streets, was inviting, by its chimes, to vespers. This town appeared to be more thriving and prosperous than any we had seen. The remark has often been made that the views of the city and its environs, from the tower of the cathedral, are similar to those of Jerusalem. San Juan de los Lagos, another city a day's journey from the former, was almost equal in beauty. Its cathedral was even more splendid. The first object which caught our attention, as we were crossing the plaza on which it fronted, was a woman creeping on her knees toward the steps of the cathedral, probably as a penance.

It was not without some apprehension, after having heard so much of guerilla parties, that we saw before us, the day after we left the last town, a company of armed men coming toward us. We were ordered to examine our arms, and have them ready for use. They proved to be government troops, which were marching to meet the insurgents in Tamaulipas county. At their head were several American deserters, but not Americans, who were leading along some females by the hand. We also met a company of "*Volunteers*," who had just been "pressed" into service. They were chained together in gangs of ten or more, and were driven along—the most desperate-looking wretches.

On the 2d of April, 1849, we reached Guadalaxara. This is the second city in Mexico, and contains a population of 125,000. Some of the cathedrals have cost millions. Many of the public buildings and squares, and the palaces of the wealthy, are very beautiful. The interiors of the cathedrals glistened with their silver shrines, chandeliers, and railings. The rude floors were covered with kneeling worshipers. The tones of the bells are very clear and sonorous. This is probably owing to the large amount of silver used in their composition. This, like the city of Mexico, is very compact, the streets straight, broad, and well paved. The houses, with their heavy-grated windows upon the streets, and their huge door-ways in the centre, gave them the appearance of so many fortresses. It is behind these walls and gates that the Mexican is luxurious and extravagant. His house is most gayly furnished, nor does he spare any expense in procuring that which will please his fancy. The women never wear bonnets. The covering for the head is called the *reboso.* This is a kind of scarf, some six feet long and three wide, which covers the head, and is drawn closely down over the face, and then crosses in front. It is a very common practice with the Mexican women to smoke the *cigarrito.*

In this city we were first made rather painfully aware of a custom of the country, of uncovering the head while passing the front portal of the cathedral. Two or three stones, well aimed, removed the hats which our hands should have removed. The streets, as in the cities generally, are here cleaned by the convicts, who are chained and guarded by soldiers. As we were passing one of these gangs, I had fallen behind my companions, and was alone. One of the soldiers came to me, and, saying "Amigo" (friend), suddenly thrust his hand into my pocket. Supposing that he wanted tobacco, I told him I had none.

While I was speaking, another soldier put his hand into a pocket on the other side.

Here we witnessed the procession of the Host. The priest, carrying the sacred emblems, rode in a carriage, followed by a band of music, and numerous attendants bearing a flag, upon which was painted the likeness of a lamb, about which were many persons bearing lighted lanterns. Then came a crowd of citizens. As the procession passed, all in the street knelt.

One among the many cathedrals we visited greatly interested us. It was filled with beautiful exotics, brought there from the gardens of the wealthy in honor of the approaching Easter holidays. As we were passing through the aisles, examining the flowers, a lady of rank and fortune, perceiving us, called a lad to her, whispering to him. He went out by a side door, but soon returned, followed by a venerable-looking priest, who addressed us in correct English. When he had read Bishop Kendrick's letter, he gave us a cordial welcome, and led us into his library, one of the largest on the continent. This contained many of our own standard works, and was ornamented by the portraits of distinguished men, among which we noticed a splendid portrait of Washington. Assuring me we should want nothing to render our journey agreeable and safe, he sent an attendant to show us the paintings and treasures of the cathedral.

On the 4th of April we left Guadalaxara, having received notice from an officer of government that no travelers were permitted to enter or to leave the city during the Easter solemnities. In a few hours we entered the wild passes of a very picturesque and mountainous country. The first time for many days our road led us along over many fine mountain streams, and through forests, where we began to find our own pine and oak. "A song for the brave old oak" was heartily responded to by all. As night set in, we pitched our camp in a narrow defile, surrounded by high peaks, which we were to ascend on the morrow. The inhabitants seemed as wild as their country. Every hour our guides were coming to us with stories of recent robberies and murders, and committed upon the very spot, perhaps, where we then were. In one deep gorge of the mountains into which we were passing, we were told that three hundred armed guerillas awaited us. And, in another place, a few days previous, some government soldiers had met a large company of robbers, and had dispersed them, after shooting several of the most desperate. In corroboration of these stories, we suddenly came upon a scene so fearfully in keeping with our own excited state of feeling, and the wild character of the country around us, that we shall never lose the impression left upon our imaginations. In the midst of a field charred and blackened by a fire which had passed over it, stood out in bold relief a gallows, upon which were hanging three mangled and distorted bodies. There they had hung about six weeks, after having murdered twenty persons. Over the gallows, which was a painted one, were printed these words of warning: "Asi Castiga La Ley Al Ladron Y Al Asesino."

Magdalena is a pleasant town, situated among the mountains, on the banks of a beautiful lake. Here we saw the first of the dramatic street representations of the closing scenes in the life of our Savior. These consisted in enacting each day in their order the events recorded in Scripture. Most of the day and one entire night were devoted to these exhibitions, in which all the people participated. In Magdalena the procession paraded the streets during the night, with torches, and accompanied by a band performing solemn music. The image of the Savior, which was Spanish in its features, like all the sacred images of Mexico, had a bandage over the eyes, and was led away by a band of ruffians, as if for trial. At a distance the image of the Virgin Mary was borne along by weeping females. We saw nothing more—not again entering any town—till the third night, when we reached Tocotes. At this stage in the series the Savior was represented as borne by the centurions and soldiers to the tomb. The image was placed in a glass coffin strewed with flowers. This was borne by men. At a distance was the image of Mary led by women, her hands folded in an attitude of grief. The cathedral was decorated with a profusion of flowers, in the midst of which was the tomb. These tragical scenes were followed, at the close, by a *fandango*, which is a dance peculiar to the country. It is a lazy shuffle, accompanied by music upon the guitar, varied occasionally by a song, in the chorus of which all present join.

During one evening of Easter, soon after we had arrived at the *meson*, some one came rushing in, informing us that the guerillas had surrounded us. Seizing our arms, we hastened to the court, where all was confusion. There were thirty robbers outside the walls. They said that they were government soldiers, and loudly demanded admittance, asserting that they came from the alcalde. The proprietor told them they were ladrones, and refused to admit them. They left soon after, threatening to return. The alcalde came in much alarmed, and told us that they were robbers; that the troops of government never traveled during Easter, and if they did they were bound to report themselves to him. We mutually pledged ourselves, in case of an attack during the night upon the town or upon our quarters, to aid the citizens or they us, as the case might be. We made our preparations for defense, and slept with our arms at our sides. Nothing more was heard of the robbers. In the vicinity of Tocotes we crossed over a remarkable mountain. For several hours we were ascending by zigzag paths, each turn bringing us higher among the clouds. When we had reached the summit point, we were several thousand feet above many of our companions and all the mules, a distance of more than two miles by the road, but in a direct line not more than one quarter of a mile, for we could distinctly hear the loud talking of the company and the shouts of the mule-drivers. We looked over the edge of the precipice, and watched our companions as they wound their way slowly up. The view was very grand, though it produced a painful giddiness. Soon after ascending this mountain, our way led us through the crater of an old volcano. There were the pumice-stone, the scoria, and the charred and blackened rocks, as though they had but just issued, boiling and bursting, from the bowels of the earth. We could imagine that we smelt the sulphurous vapor and felt the volcanic heat arising from the pent-up fires below, so fresh did the whole field of desolation and ruin appear. And our imaginations were carried back to the fearfully terrific scenes which had been enacted here. The descent from the table-land down to the shores of the Pacific is abrupt and steep. On the 12th of April we reached San Blas, a dull and unhealthy sea-port. At this place, our company, which had hung together in fragments, was dissolved. Men alone are not social beings; and the numerous attempts to bind them together in California gold-mining associations are as vain as the attempt to make a rope of sand.

After some delay in making our preparations, we embarked at San Blas on the 12th of April, in the San Blasiña, a schooner of twenty-three tons—being thirty-six feet long and twelve wide—for San Francisco. In this miserable, unseaworthy craft, thirty-eight of us took passage. It was represented to us that the Pacific was so quiet that it would be safe to go up in open boats. Alas for our error! Yet it was only too common. In some instances, emigrants, in their extreme anxiety to proceed on their way, have embarked in whale boats at Panama, hoping to reach San Francisco. Our voyage to Mazatlan was most disagreeable. We were so cramped for room on deck, the hold being filled with bananas, that three of us slept in a canoe hewed from a log, which was made secure on deck. The portion of it which I occupied was two and a half feet long and three and a half wide. There I slept for eight nights. On the 20th of April we reached Mazatlan, after having been put upon an allowance of water, and the last day having no water at all. This is an important sea-port and a fine city. Though it possesses no public buildings of note, many of the dwelling houses are spacious and pleasant. Its fine bathing-ground forms its principal attraction. A small and inferior chapel is the only place of worship, while the amphitheatre for the bull-fights is a spacious inclosure, capable of accommodating many hundred persons. This "Plaza de los Toros," as it is called, is an amphitheatre covering about one quarter of an acre. Around this the seats are arranged in tiers. On one side are the pens for the bulls, on the other the elevated seat of the manager, fancifully decorated. Large show-bills state the number and qualifications of the various animals, brute and human, to be brought forward, and invite all who are so disposed to be present. The Sabbath is generally the day selected for the spectacle, and on the morning of that day a procession of the *valiant and brave*, already equipped for the encounter, and accompanied by martial music, parade the streets. During the pauses in the music, a crier, in a loud voice, boasts the victories they expect to achieve. Many of the spectators are females. Nothing but unmingled disgust and loathing can be excited by the scene. It is a disgraceful and cowardly butchery, in which the poor animal has not even one chance of defense or escape.

A great number of Americans were waiting at this place for opportunities to go to San Francisco. Many of them had exhausted their means, and were engaging in various employments to raise money to take them through.

There are about seven millions of inhabitants in Mexico. The rich class are very wealthy, own most of the land in the country, and live in palaces in the cities. They are few in number. Among them may be classed a portion of the priests. The poor class constitute the great majority, seldom owning any property, and the larger proportion being abjectly poor.

We took our departure from Mazatlan on May 4th, having spent two weeks in litigation respecting the schooner, which resulted in favor of the passengers, and made us, the first time in our lives, *ship-owners*. The whole had been an unfortunate operation, and we had already paid more for our passage than the schooner was worth. The owners had *lost* the money which had been advanced to them, and were unable to comply with the terms of the contract, by putting the schooner in sailing order in Mazatlan. Papers were accordingly made out, giving us undisputed possession of twenty-three tons burden of shipping. Our captain, a very old man, had not been to sea for twenty years before this memorable voyage. I shall presently have to relate an account of the *adroit* manner in which he upset a boat-load of us to pass half an hour among the sharks and waves before we could get to land. Our mate was a Frenchman, and the only skillful sailor among us. He knew that we were proceeding on a wrong course, and as it was mutiny to put the vessel on a right course by day-light, as soon as it was dark enough he would put the "ship about," so that what we lost in the day we gained in the night. The rest of the crew were sailors drafted from the passengers. We were again short of water, and having been unable to procure a supply along the coast, we anchored off San José, a small town near the cape. The captain requested me to accompany him on shore. The waves ran very high, and it was dangerous to attempt a landing, unless under the guidance of one who understood "surfing a boat." After every third wave which breaks upon the shore, there is a lull, short indeed, but of sufficient length to permit a boat which follows instantaneously upon it to get beyond the reach of the first wave of the next series. The only method is to row nearly to the line where the waves show a long white crest before they break upon the shore, and then to rest upon the oars. As soon as the third wave has passed, the rowers must urge the boat promptly and vigorously in. If this one rule is neglected, the "swamping" of the boat must inevitably be the result. The captain explained this so accurately that we could not doubt his skill. We had four stout rowers, breathlessly awaiting the signal upon the brink of the breakers. But, unfortunately, the signal came between the second and third waves. We were a hundred yards from the landing. Suddenly we heard the warning roar, like the low tone of the distant thunder. I looked behind, and the wave was moving toward us like an impending wall, six feet above the boat. Suddenly it broke, showing the white crest rapidly extending itself along as far as the eye could reach. Its first approach tossed the boat, like a straw, on one side, and instantly the whole wave came toppling down upon us, burying the boat and three of those who were in it beneath the rushing tides. I had risen from my seat, and the wave struck me many feet toward the shore, crushing my hat over my face and eyes, so that some moments and several waves passed over me before I could again see. When I was able to look around me, the captain and one of my companions were swimming for land. The others were clinging to the keel of the boat, after having been buried beneath it till they were nearly strangled. Those who were swimming were soon on shore, the captain so completely exhausted that he sank down into the water, and was dragged back to the dry sand. In half an hour all were safe on the beach, grateful for so remarkable a deliverance. Our danger was greatly increased by the fact that the place was infested with sharks. The next day, as we were walking along the shore, two fish darted out of the water, and were instantly followed by two large sharks, which pursued them high upon the beach. We made several attempts to double the cape and proceed on our way, but were driven back each time by heavy head winds. In our third attempt we were becalmed, and spent the most of the day in rowing our schooner along, which we did at the rate of three miles an hour. After we had turned in, and were sleeping upon some water and provision casks in the hold, made level by laying down sticks of wood and boards between them, a severe gale sprang up, and drove us at a fearful rate from our course. The sails were rent, and flapped wildly in the wind. No one but the mate dared to approach them. He was at the helm, which he lashed down while he drew in and furled the refractory sails. Our danger was great, and during the long hours of that night there was little sleep among us. Eight, each unknown to the others, formed a resolution, that if we lived to reach the land, we would never again risk our lives in the San Blasiña. Near the close of the next day, we anchored in a narrow roadstead off the cape. The mate and many of the passengers went on shore, which was half a mile distant, taking the torn sails to be mended. The boat was also hauled up on the beach, and turned over to be caulked. It was near night of the following day, and we were all scattered over the beach and in the village, when alarm guns from the schooner arrested our attention. To our surprise, the vessel had changed her position, having dragged her only anchor. She was already nearly two miles distant, those on board having lost much time in ineffectual attempts to bring her back to anchorage. By the time the mate and a crew daring enough to venture out could be found, she was almost at sea, and already pitching about over the waves. Soon a dark, cloudy night obscured the schooner and the boat alike from our view. We kindled a large beacon-fire on the beach, and, wrapping ourselves in our blankets, anxiously awaited the return of our companions. In the morning the schooner was safely moored near the shore.

At this place our ship's company was divided, a part being determined to proceed on their journey by sea, while another part intended to walk up to San Francisco, a distance of twelve hundred miles, over a barren country, and uninhabited except by Indians. Of these latter, a portion started by an almost imperceptible path, which led them toward the Atlantic coast, while the remaining four of us expected to proceed up the gulf coast. As we ascended the hills behind the village, we caught a last look of the schooner, already out some distance at sea. When we reached San José, to our joy we found the Scottish barque Collooney, Capt. Livingston, for San Francisco, anchored there, having put in for water. We were received on board, and on May 25th weighed anchor and were again on our way. The Collooney was from Panama, having on board two hundred passengers; with accommodations for twenty. At the time for meals, two assistant stewards, mounted upon the long boat near the two galleys, called over the names of the passengers belonging to their divisions. As his name was called, each one walked up if it was calm, and reeled up if it was rough, to the galleys, and received in a tin plate and dipper his allowance. It was a tedious voyage of thirty-five days from the cape to San Francisco. On several Sundays I was invited to preach upon the quarter-deck. On these occasions we were sometimes favored with original hymns from the pen of T. G. Spear, of Philadelphia, who was a passenger on board. I shall give a part of one of these as very appropriate.

"Our path is on the mighty deep,
But God is with us there,

To guard us in the night, asleep,
And in the noonday's glare.

Our barque, a speck beneath the sky,
His hand conveys along;
He makes the winds around her fly,
Be gentle or be strong.

Here let us pause, and praise, and pray,
And seek that boon sublime,
That opens up a brighter day,
And smooths the storms of time."

Much of the time was passed in vexatious calms. We were such a picture as Coleridge had in his mind when he wrote,

"Day after day, day after day,
We stuck, nor breath nor motion,
As idly as a painted ship
Upon a painted ocean."

June 25th, 1849, we reached San Francisco, seventy-four days from San Blas, and one hundred and forty-five days from Philadelphia. This wonderful city is an uninviting spot. There is but a small strip of level land, crowded down to the bay, surrounded by high, sandy hills, covered with short bushes, while not a tree is to be seen. The city is composed chiefly of tents. Each day regularly, at about ten o'clock, there arrives in the city, coming down with a rush over the bleak and barren hills, a cold, chilling wind, which takes one at once from the summer to the winter solstice. Fires are comfortable, and cloaks or serapis are necessary. Gambling seems to be universal. Rents are held at the most exorbitant prices. I almost fear to risk my credibility by stating that the Parker House rents at $150,000 a year. On the afternoon of the second day after our arrival, the 27th of June, our luggage being transferred from the Collooney to a river schooner which was taken alongside, we "set sail" up the bay.

We spent the first night at Benicia, anchoring near the landing. Taking our blankets, as we would our umbrellas at home, we called upon the Rev. Mr. W., and were introduced by him to a trader, who kindly permitted us to sleep in a large unfinished room, while in another part of the same room were a party consisting of a Mexican master and his peons, on their way to the mines.

June 29th. Arrived at Sacramento City, the present of which is under canvas, and the future on paper. Every thing is new except the ground, and trees, and the stars, beneath a canopy of which we slept. Quarreling and cheating form the employments, drinking and gambling the amusements, making the largest pile of gold the only ambition of the inhabitants. As each one steps his foot on shore, he seems to have entered a magic circle, in which he is under the influence of new impulses. The wills of all seem under the control of some strong and hidden agency. The city is every day newly filled, then emptied but to be filled again. The crowd ever presses on, elate with hope, excited by expectations, which it would be impossible to define or realize. The world-renowned Sutter's Fort, which is two miles from the landing, is a rude structure made of sun-dried bricks, about five hundred feet long and two hundred wide. It is now used for other purposes, a part of it being fitted up as a hospital.

July 2d. Walked from Sacramento to Mormon Island, a distance of twenty-nine miles; and the next day, each one having forty pounds of baggage upon his back, consisting of a cradle, tools for mining, provisions, blankets, &c., walked eight miles farther up the south fork of the American River to Salmon Falls, there to commence our mining operations.

CHAPTER III.

NORTHERN MINES.

Salmon Falls, South Fork of the American River,
July 4th, 1849.

Here we are, at length, in the gold diggings. Seated around us, upon the ground, beneath a large oak, are a group of wild Indians, from the tribe called "Diggers," so named from their living chiefly upon roots. These Indians are of medium size, seldom more than five feet and eight or ten inches high; are very coarse and indolent in appearance, of a dark complexion, with long black hair which comes down over the face; are uncivilized, and possess few of the arts of life. They weave a basket of willow so closely as to hold water, in which they boil their mush, made of acorns dried and pounded to a powder, or their flour, purchased at some trading tent. You will perhaps ask how water can be boiled in a basket without the fire's burning it. This is done simply by heating stones and putting them into the water, which is thus, in a short time, raised to the boiling point. They have brought us in some salmon, one of which weighs twenty-nine pounds. These they spear with great dexterity, and exchange for provisions, or clothing, and ornaments of bright colors. We are surrounded on all sides by high, steep mountains, over which are scattered the evergreen and white oak, and which are inhabited by the wolf and bear.* This will always be to us a memorable fourth of July, as being our first day at the mines. We have spent the day in "*prospecting*." This term, as it designates a very important part of the business of mining, requires explanation. I should first, however, give some description of the bar upon which we are to labor. This lies on both sides the river, and is covered with smooth, brassy-looking rocks, some of which weigh many tons. It is a little higher than the water-level; but we find, as we dig down, that the water soon begins to flow in, and must be "baled out." This bar, or rather succession of bars, extends a distance of some miles up and down the river, over which the water runs with surprising rapidity in the freshets, which are common during the rainy reason, and break up and reduce the gold-bearing quartz, tearing it away from its primitive bed, robbing it, in its course, of its virgin gold, and attriting it till it is at length deposited, in greater or less abundance, within some crevice or some water-worn hollow, or beneath some rock so formed as to receive it. These bars vary from a few feet to several hundred yards in width. In order to find the deposits, the ground must be "prospected." A spot is first selected, in the choice of which science has little and chance every thing to do. The stones and loose upper soil, as also the subsoil, almost down to the primitive rock, are removed. Upon or near this rock most of the gold is found; and it is the object, in every mining operation, to reach this, however great the labor, and even if it lies forty, eighty, or a hundred feet beneath the surface. If, when this strata-belt of rock is attained, it is found to present a smooth surface, it may as well be abandoned at once; if soft and friable, or if seamed with crevices, running at angles with the river, the prospect of the miner is favorable. Some of the dirt is then put into a pan, and taken to the water, and washed out with great care. The miner stoops down by the stream, choosing a place where there is the least current, and, dipping a quantity of water into the pan with the dirt, stirs it about with his hands, washing and throwing out the large pebbles, till the dirt is thoroughly wet. More water is then taken into the pan, and the whole mass is well stirred and shaken, and the top gravel thrown off with the fingers, while the gold, being heavier, sinks deeper into the pan. It is then shaken about, more water being continually added, and thrown off with a sideway motion, which carries with it the dirt at the top, while the gold settles yet lower down. It must be often stirred with the hands to prevent "baking," as the hardening of the mud at the bottom is called. When the dirt is nearly washed out, great care is requisite to prevent the lighter scales of gold from being washed out with the magnetic sand, which is best done by pushing back the gold, and cleaning the sand from the edge of the pan with the thumb. At length a ridge of gold scales, mixed with a little sand, remains in the pan, from the quantity of which some estimate may be formed of the richness of the place. If there are five to eight grains, it is considered that "it will pay." If less gold is found, the miner digs deeper or opens a new hole, till he finds a place affording a good *prospect*. When this is done, he sets his cradle by the side of the stream, in some convenient place, and proceeds to wash all the dirt. This is aptly named *prospecting*, and is the hardest part of a miner's business. Thus have we been employed the whole of this day, digging one hole after another—washing out many test-pans—hoping, at every new attempt, to find that which would reward our toil, and we have made *ten cents* each.

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* We were induced to come to this place by the accounts we received of the success of two brothers—Jordan—who, in a few weeks, made $3000 here, and are now on their way home.

July 5th. My share to-day is $1 25. These details may appear dull and uninteresting; but the reader will bear in mind that it is the writer's object to give a full and true description of a miner's life. He might pass by all the days and months of profitless labor, and record only the days of success; but those who have friends at the mines, and those who purpose going there, will certainly wish to know what are the trials and discouragements of such a life. They wish to know the *truth*.

July 6th. We have to-day removed to the opposite side of the river. This, with pitching our tent, has occupied most of the day. Still, we have made $4 each. I have been seated for several hours by the river side, rocking a heavy cradle filled with dirt and stones. The working of a cradle requires from three to five persons, according to the character of the diggings. If there is much of the auriferous dirt, and it is easily obtained, three are sufficient; but if there is little soil, and this found in crevices, so as only to be obtained with the knife, five or more can be employed in keeping the cradle in operation. One of these gives his whole attention to working the cradle, and another takes the dirt to be washed, in pans or buckets, from the hole to the cradle, while one or two others supply the buckets. The cradle, so called from its general resemblance to that article of furniture, has two rockers, which move easily back and forth in two grooves of a frame, which is laid down firmly on the edge of or over the water, so that the person working it may at the same time dip up the water. It must be inclined a few degrees forward, that the dirt may be washed gradually out, and must be so placed that the mud may be carried off with the stream. Cleets are nailed across the bottom of the body, over which the loose dirt passes with the water, and behind which the magnetic sand and gold settle. An apron is placed beneath the hopper, and conducts the water, dirt, &c., from that to the body below—a construction similar to that of the common fanning-mill. The hopper, which is placed at the top of the cradle behind, is a box, the bottom of which is a sheet of tin, zinc, or sheet iron, perforated with holes from the size of a gold dollar up to that of a quarter eagle. Through these the dirt, gravel, and gold are all carried by the water upon the apron and into the body below, leaving only the pebbles, too large to be passed through, in the hopper, which are thrown out by raising it in the hands, and by a sudden forward, then backward motion, depositing them on one side in a heap. To facilitate this operation, the hopper is sometimes made with hinges, by which means, by the raising the forward end, the dirt falls over behind. There is generally a handle, so placed on one side that the cradle may be rocked with the left hand, leaving it to the choice of the person rocking whether to stand or sit while at work. The dirt taken from the hole is turned into the hopper at the top. The person, rocking the cradle with his left hand, at the same time uses his right in dipping up continually ladles of water, which he dashes upon the dirt in the hopper. Twenty-five buckets of dirt are generally washed through, the mass in the body of the cradle being occasionally stirred up to prevent its hardening, and thus causing the gold to slide over it and be lost. It is then drawn off into a pan through holes at the bottom of the cradle, and "panned out," or washed, in the same way as in prospecting. While this is being done by one of the company, it is common for the others to spend the ten minutes' interval in resting themselves. Seated upon the rocks about their companion, they watch the ridge of gold as it dimples brightly up amid the black sand, seeming to me always *the smile of hope*, while many enlivening remarks and the cheering laugh go round. At length, the washing completed, the pan passes from one to another, while each one gives his opinion as to the quantity. The holes in the bottom of the cradle are stopped, more dirt is thrown into the hopper, and again the grating, scraping sounds are heard which are peculiar to the rocking of the cradle, and which, years hence, will accompany our dreams of the mines.

July 7th. This morning witnessed an instance of that remarkable success in mining which rarely occurs, but which, when it takes place, turns the heads of so many. I might aptly quote Virgil's figurative description of Rumor, and apply it to these gold stories. They go out quite respectable in appearance, furnished with hat and cane at the start, but, as they proceed, they suddenly expand to the proportions of Hercules, with his trunk of a tree for a club. We met this story long afterward, after it had returned from its voyage to the States and to Europe, and, but for its having claimed Salmon Falls as its birth-place, it could not have been recognized at all. The facts were simply these: Two Irishmen followed the "lead" of the Jordan brothers, who had made their gold by penetrating into a bank which had evidently been detached from the mountains behind in some convulsion of nature, and pushed forward over the bar. They commenced in the bank at the edge of the bar, and when they reached the line in which the Jordans had found their vein, they were so fortunate as to find it again. This vein is about seven inches wide, and ten feet below the surface of the bank, and is imbedded in a stratum of hard clay, through which the fine scale gold is richly sprinkled. The vein runs, in a compact body, diagonally across the claims which have been and are being "worked out," and so on, in a straight line, to the edge of the bar, where it is broken, scattered, and lost by its descent. At this remarkable place, these two men, before breakfast this morning, took out $422. As I witnessed their success, for we are working within three yards of them, and when I held a large bottle, nearly full of the beautiful gold, in my hands, I was at first conscious of feelings of elation and hope. This has given place, this evening, to temporary despondency, for I have been compelled to contrast our own small operations with their brilliant success. Poor Jemmie, one of these Irishmen, and who had never before been the owner of a sovereign, said to me to-day, "Every body is talking about my good luck, but, I don't know how it is, I can't feel so; and, faith, I think *a sovereign looks to me more!*" Our company have been engaged to-day in "prospecting," and preparing for work. The last washings, near night, gave us fifty cents to the pan, which is considered encouraging.

July 8th, Sunday. All the miners upon the bar, with the exception of one man, who is working by himself below, have laid aside their labors for the day. This is, partly at least, owing to a regard for its sacredness. And when may we be so much sustained by the encouragements, cheered by the promises, or influenced by the restraints of religion, as in the circumstances in which we are now placed? Religion—Heaven's most precious gift to man—comes and offers to lead us, and to be with us in all our weary exile from home.

July 9th. To-day we have made $20 each. One of the conclusions at which we are rapidly arriving is, that the chances of our making a fortune in the gold mines are about the same as those in favor of our drawing a prize in a lottery. No kind of work is so uncertain. A miner may happen upon a good location in his very first attempt, and in a very few days make his hundreds or thousands, while the old miners about him may do nothing. Two foreigners, who had been some time in the mines, began to work their respective claims, leaving a small space between them. The question arose to which of them this space belonged. As they could not amicably settle the dispute, they agreed to leave it to the decision of an American who happened by, and who had not yet done an hour's work in the mines. He measured off ten feet—which is allowed by custom—to each of the claimants, taking for his trouble the narrow strip of land lying between them. In a few hours, the larger claims, belonging to the old miners, were abandoned as useless, while the new miner discovered a deposit which yielded him $7435.

July 10th. We made $3 each to-day. This life of severe hardship and exposure has affected my health. Our diet consists of hard bread, flour, which we eat half cooked, and salt pork, with occasionally a salmon which we purchase of the Indians. Vegetables are not to be procured. Our feet are wet all day, while a hot sun shines down upon our heads, and the very air parches the skin like the hot air of an oven. Our drinking water comes down to us thoroughly impregnated with the mineral substances washed through the thousand cradles above us. After our days of labor, exhausted and faint, we *retire*—if this word may be applied to the simple act of lying down in our clothes—robbing our feet of their boots to make a pillow of them, and wrapping our blankets about us, on a bed of pine boughs, or on the ground, beneath the clear, bright stars of night. Near morning there is always a change in the temperature of the air, and several blankets become necessary. Then the feet and the hands of the novice in this business become blistered and lame, and the limbs are stiff. Besides all these causes of sickness, the anxieties and cares which wear away the life of so many men who leave their families to come to this land of gold, contribute, in no small degree, to this same result. It may with truth be said, "the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint." I have to-day removed to the top of the hill above the encampment, and beneath a large oak-tree, for the benefit of a cooler air and shade during the intense heat of noon.

Aug. 20th. After my last date I was prostrated at once by the acclimating disease of the country, and rendered as helpless as a child. All day and all night long I was alone under my oak, and without those kind attentions so necessary in sickness, and which can not be had here. I was reduced to a very low state, with but little hope, under the circumstances, of recovery. It did seem hard to lie down to die there, and to think that I was no more to see my beloved family. Yet I feared not to die. Indeed, I marked off the spot under the oak where my grave should be, and prayed for submission to God's righteous will, and that his love would protect and bless those dear to me.

The lines of an Englishman, addressed, as he was dying at the mines, "to a gold coin," vividly described my feelings at that time:

"For thee, for thee, vile yellow slave,
I left a heart that loved me true!
I crossed the tedious ocean-wave,
To roam in climes unkind and new.
The cold wind of the stranger blew
Chill on my withered heart—the grave
Dark and untimely met my view—
And all for thee, vile yellow slave!"

At this critical time, a gentleman from New Orleans, hearing of my case, came up to see me, and gave me a few pills, which, fortunately, he had with him. They checked the disease, and after a few hours I could eat a bird shot and cooked for me by a kind friend. Not soon shall I forget this noble-hearted friend, B. Rough as a grisly bear, he was yet one of nature's noblemen. At home he filled, at one time, the office of sheriff. He said that the office cost him too much, and was making him poor. If he was sent to seize a destitute woman's effects for rent, he would be sure to pay that rent, and then would send her a bag of flour from his own farm. Thus we learn that many of the most valuable traits of character and excellencies of heart lie, like the purest gold, concealed beneath a rough surface.

Not thinking it best, in the feeble state of my health, to return to mining immediately, as soon as I was strong enough, with my blankets upon my back, I walked to "Sutter's Mill," now named Coloma. When I first reached the country, a school had been offered me in this place at a stipulated compensation of $16 a day. After spending a few days with Mr. W., one of the two who discovered the first gold, while engaged in digging a mill-race for Mr.

Sutter, a spot now regarded with peculiar interest, my health was so much improved that I concluded to return to the mines.

On reaching Salmon Falls, to my surprise I found Mr. C., a French gentleman, and who had formerly had the charge of the French classes in my seminary, and who was now waiting to invite me to join himself and a friend, a dentist from Philadelphia, in a prospecting tour upon the north and middle forks. We spent two weeks in this exploring tour, and on our return to Salmon Falls spent several days in mining there. When all our expenses were paid and a dividend made, we had $2 each, the result of three weeks of hard toil.

Hearing of good diggings at Weaver's Creek, I proposed to my companions to go over, and, after prospecting, send them word. One of them accompanied me on my way as far as Coloma. As he was leaving me to return, after spending the night together in an emigrant's wagon we found by the roadside, a miner who had just arrived, after a long and dangerous journey across the plains, rode up to me. He told me he was without money, and without provisions or tools for mining, having exhausted his means on his long journey. This miner, named W., had been a Texas Ranger. When he told me his condition, I went with him into Coloma, and succeeded in procuring all he wanted on a credit of a few days. He manifested his gratitude by offering to pack my provisions with his own upon his mule, and to accompany me wherever I was going. After traveling three miles, we stopped under a tree to cook slap-jacks—a fried batter—and pork, and wait for the cool of the evening. About four o'clock we again started for the diggings on Weaver's Creek, five miles distant. Taking the wrong trail, we lost our way, and wandered on six miles till it was too dark to see the path. We were in a wild gorge of the mountain, hungry and tired, with no means of kindling a fire, and my feet badly blistered. But our most serious want was that of water, our thirst having become intolerable. We tied a rope to the neck of our mule, keeping one end of it in our hands, hoping that his instinct would lead him to water; but we were disappointed; and hungry, thirsty, and tired, we laid us down where we could feel a place in the dark which was smooth enough.

In the morning we found, to our surprise, that we had been sleeping in the middle of the road, and within a few yards of us was a fine spring of water. Yesterday morning we reached Weaver's Creek, and, after prospecting some hours, located ourselves on the spot where we now are at work, with some good prospect of success. Just below us is a Georgia miner, who showed me to-day nine pounds of gold he made last week with the assistance of two hired men. The mountains here are very precipitous and abrupt, hanging over our heads in wild grandeur. The creek is only accessible through wild ravines and over steep mountains. Owing to their great depth, and their being shut up on all sides by mountains so lofty that the sun rises two hours later, and sets two hours earlier than upon the plains, the heat is most intense. We have spent our first day in making preparations for our work. W. is now putting up a brush arbor, to guard us more effectually against the heat of the sun. Beneath the same large and wide-spreading tree are two other companies of miners. In one of these companies is a Missourian, shivering beneath the hot sun with a violent attack of fever and ague. For several days I have remonstrated with him against going into the cold water when heated, and standing there while washing out the gold. To-day he became much heated, and in this state repeated the experiment, and in ten minutes was seen creeping into his blankets. In a little time he sent for me. His look was very wild and wandering as I went to his side, and he said, looking up shivering into the tree above him, "Woods, if you don't remove this tree, my fever never *will* break."

Weaver's Creek, Aug. 21st. Our mining company has been to-day increased, two others having joined us, making our number five. One of these has been engaged in walling in a spring where we obtain our drinking-water—another is making a cradle. The others have been employed in removing the stones and top soil, and carrying the auriferous dirt on hand-barrows, made of hides, down to the edge of the water, ready to be washed. From every indication, we have "struck a rich lead." We find much gold on the rocks: on one I counted twenty-five scales.

Aug. 22d. We have finished our cradle, and washed a little dirt this forenoon, which yielded us about $10 in all. Our hopes are bright for the morrow.

Aug. 23d. How is "the gold become dim!" After all our preparations and hopes, our toil early and late, toil of the most laborious kind, digging down in the channel of the river till the water was up to our knees, giving ourselves barely time to eat, we have made but $4 each. We sat down upon the rocks, and looked at the small ridge of gold in the pan, and then at each other. One fell to swearing, another to laughing; I tried to say some encouraging things. Our way indeed is dark, and great are our difficulties, and oft-repeated our failures, and we experience the bitterness of the "hope deferred which maketh the heart sick," but our motto must be *press on*. The motives which induced us to come here were good—our object is good—then, trusting in God's merciful providence, let us *persevere*.

One young man near us has just died. He was without companion or friend—alone in his tent. Not even his name could be discovered. We buried him, tied down his tent, leaving his effects within. Thus is a home made doubly desolate. Years will pass, and that loved son, or brother, or husband still be expected, and the question still repeated, Why don't he come? Right below me, upon a root of our wide-spreading oak, is seated an old man of threescore and ten years. He left a wife and seven children at home, whose memory he cherishes with a kind of devotion unheard of before. He says when he is home-sick he can not cry, but it makes him sick at his stomach. He is an industrious old man, but has not made enough to buy his provisions, and we have given him a helping hand. Is it surprising that many fly to gambling, and more to drink, to drown their disappointments? To-day I have weighed my little store of gold, after paying all expenses, and find it amounts, after over six weeks of hard labor, to $35.

Aug. 25th. Yesterday I returned to Salmon Falls, and am again encamped beneath the old oak upon the hill, Mr. C. and his friend being with me. They have slung their hammocks up among the branches, where they sleep comfortably, protected from the ants and vermin. My bed is, as usual, upon the ground, where even my night-bag does not guard me from the annoying attacks of the ants and lizards. Last night, after I had fallen asleep, my companions were aroused by hearing a ciote barking near us, and soon they saw him come and smell of my hands and face, seeming to doubt whether he could take a bite without being detected.

A company of nineteen have just commenced damming the river at the head of an island above the falls, nearly a mile in length, by which they expect to lay bare the channel, on one side, the whole length of the island. The proceedings of a meeting of the company to-day, with reference to my admission, were truly Californian. It was first resolved that I should be admitted, and then, as they had been at work two days, that I should furnish the company five bottles of brandy as the condition of my membership. The brandy was bought and drank, and then a committee waited upon me to notify me that I was a member, and that the trader had furnished them brandy to the amount of $10 on my account. As they knew that there was no other way by which they could obtain a "treat" from me, it was bought and drank before I was informed of the transaction.

On my way from Weaver's Creek yesterday, I made the acquaintance of an intelligent gentleman from Washington City, who had held there a profitable office under government, and had left a family behind him. He came hoping to better a good condition. A few days labor in the mines was sufficient to convince him that it would have been better to "let well enough alone." His is not a solitary case. The mines are full of such. The wonderful instances of success which those at home are made to believe are common, are about in the proportion of one to a thousand. Of the nine hundred and ninety-nine cases of failure, or at least of limited success, those at a distance know nothing—nothing of the privations and discouragements, trials, dangers, and deaths.

Aug. 26th. On my way to the place for preaching to-day, I stepped into a hornet's nest, and was badly stung on my hand. These hornets, called "yellow jackets," live around and in our tents, and share our provisions. I have had twenty of them on my plate at once. My hand was much swollen, and I feared I should be unable to fulfill my engagement with the company by preaching to them. The kindness of the wife of one of the miners, who brought a bottle of hartshorn from the tent, and bathed my hand with it, soon relieved me. Our church was "God's first temple." My audience were seated upon the grass on the river bank, beneath a cluster of pine trees. There they were, from all the states—from Europe, from Africa, from Oceanica. Such hours of worship on God's holy day, spent with my mining companions, or with some beloved Christian brother who remained "steadfast, unmoveable" in his integrity amid the corrupting vices of the mines, will never be forgotten. When we could not walk to the house of God in company, we sometimes walked upon the mountains, and there together sang the songs of Zion, and prayed to the Father ever merciful and good in a strange land. I take pleasure in recalling to my mind such a noble-hearted Christian, who had devoted one fourth of all his anticipated earnings in California to religious charities. It was my pleasure afterward, when in San Francisco, to send him, through the Secretary of the American Bible Society, a quantity of Bibles, hymn-books, and sermons, his purpose being to form a Bible class among the miners. He wished them to be sent as early as possible, as "he hoped," he said, "to get possession of the ground, and thus keep out the gambling table and the brandy bottle."

Sept. 3d. We are yet at work throwing a dam over the river. It would be thought, from the manner in which some members of the company talk about what they "know must be" in the channel of the river, that they expect to do no more work after this. A perfect Mohammedan heaven, with its tree bearing every luxury, its beautiful treasures, its arbors where no care or trouble exist, seem ready to be revealed as soon as the water which curtains them over shall be drawn aside. An interesting incident occurred to-day. A young Englishman in our company, from the Society Islands, was returning to his tent during the interval at noon for lunch and rest. On his way, one of the many strangers he met inquired the way to certain mines below. From this they fell into a conversation upon some indifferent topic, and both being wearied, they sat down, side by side, upon a rock, little thinking what an interesting and beautiful revelation was about to be made to them. In the conversation, one incidentally inquired of the other where he was from. "From the Society Islands," was the reply. With an awakened interest in his manner, he inquired, "Which island?" "Tahiti," was the answer. He looked into the face of the other with a searching gaze, and with deep emotion inquired, "What is your name?" "H.," he said. "*You are my brother!*" And they were locked in each other's arms. There they are, on the bar below me, walking arm in arm, and conversing with intense interest. I afterward learned more of these brothers from a lady, whose father was the first missionary to Tahiti.

Sept. 8th. Our damming operation has been an entire failure. We spent many days in constructing the dam, which, when completed, drained a large portion of the river. When this was done, we thoroughly prospected the whole, and found nothing. The banks and bars of the river were rich in some places, but there was not a grain of gold in the channel.

Sept. 9th. Attended preaching at Mormon Island to-day. Being late out, I called to spend the night with a company of gentlemen from Cincinnati, who are encamped in a solitary place some two miles below Salmon Falls, upon the river. We had just finished our supper an hour since, during which they were relating to me some difficulties they had with the Indians, who had stolen $200 from them. After this theft, and the measures which had been resorted to for the recovery of the money, the Indians would frequently come after dark and throw stones across the river into their camp.

Sept. 15th. Upon a bar above our dam some miners lately met with some success. Rumors of this success, but much exaggerated, were circulated. Ounces were reported pounds. The change at once was magical. Trading tents, the signs of rival physicians, eating and gambling booths have sprung up, and the noise and confusion of a large village are heard. More than a hundred men are at work upon the bar. The auriferous dirt must be taken a quarter of a mile to the river to be washed. Some do this by packing the dirt in bags upon mules, and some pack this upon their own backs. One company, from Hartford, gave us a surprise this morning. They had with them a quantity of hose, and by this means brought the water from the river upon the bar, thus saving the labor of packing the dirt. The gold is chiefly found in one vein, running in nearly a direct line at right angles to the river. The few who have found this vein have done comparatively well. All the rest "spend their labor for that which is not bread." A company of Cincinnati miners have invited me to work with them a "claim" upon this bar. They have just told me that the Indians came last night in large numbers, and made an attack upon their camp, which they were compelled to abandon at midnight, and, swimming the river, to take refuge with a company of New York miners.

Sept. 18th. There is but little dirt upon this bar, and it is now regarded as "worked out," and the miners are leaving as fast as they came. Our company have made upon the bar $65 each. I have been now three months in the mines, and have made $390. There is much sickness here. One half of the whole population are sick. I have to-day been informed of the mournful death of a merchant from Philadelphia, a fellow-voyager from Cape San Lucas. He was the object of anxious solicitude to his friends soon after his arrival at San Francisco. He had come on with bright hopes, which were sadly disappointed. To drown his sorrows and disappointments, he had given himself up to drink. Many times had they expostulated with him, but in vain. He died at San Francisco.

Sept. 30th. Left Salmon Falls on Wednesday last for San Francisco. My object in taking this journey was to get my letters from home. On my arrival in the country I had received letters, but it is now five months since my last were dated. My anxiety to hear from my family had become very great. A friend offered me the use of a vicious mule for the journey to Sacramento. No bridle could be borrowed, and, besides, I was to be mounted upon a pack-saddle without stirrups. Imagine me, then, as thus starting off, my hair and beard of truly patriarchal length, all unshorn and unshaven. Such superfluities as coat, vest, collar, cravat, &c., were only remembered with the other comforts once enjoyed.

My red flannel garments gave me a rather warlike appearance. Thus habited and mounted, a rope's end was tied around my mule's neck, which passed in a running noose over his nose, while I checked his movements by the other end, which I held in my hand. He did his best several times to run with me and to throw me, and my companions enjoyed their sport at my expense. The mule had a most ludicrous way of throwing up his head and braying as he was about starting to run. From this circumstance I named him "Roaring Lion." They were compelled to acknowledge that in these trials of strength I had the "upper hand."

At Sacramento I inquired for a bag of clothing which I supposed had been stored in the place, and, after a long search, it was pointed out to me hanging in a tree-top in the town. The friend with whom I left it in charge to store had put his own clothing in it, and, to avoid paying the exorbitant price charged for storage, had deposited it where found. On reaching San Francisco, after a tedious voyage of five days, I hastened at once to the office of Livingston & Co. to get my letters. When I inquired for them, I was told there were a number for me, but, on looking for them, it was found that they had been forwarded, only the day before, to the mines. My disappointment was great. All the other privations and trials to which I had been subject were truly light compared with this. But, like them all, it had this good effect: it led me to set a higher and more true estimate upon the blessings of our native land. How priceless, when thus deprived of them, become our homes—better than fine gold! On turning away from the office, oppressed with anxiety and disappointment, I was walking slowly up the street, when the lively notes of a piano struck my ear. I stopped to listen. It was a favorite home song—"We have lived and loved together." My feelings were moved with emotions of inexpressible tenderness and sorrow.

San Francisco, Oct. 19th. Have spent nearly three weeks in this city, waiting for letters. Col. Moore, post-master, kindly interested himself in the recall of those sent to the mountains, but they have not been received. Two mail steamers have arrived since I have been here, and, though three mails were due, have brought none. Not only one gulf, but parts of two oceans and one continent, are between me and my family, while the only comfort which reaches me is the thought that those I love are under the protecting care of an Almighty Friend.

There is much sickness now in this city. Many come down sick from the mines. The situation of such is desperate indeed. There is a heartless unconcern in the community generally to the sufferings and wants of the many who are dying wretched deaths in the midst of them. It may not, perhaps, be possible that it should be otherwise. Every man is too much occupied with his own concerns to be able to search out objects of charity; and there are so many such cases constantly recurring, as to induce a feeling of indifference, the result of familiarity with the sufferings of others. I was present at a religious meeting when this subject was mentioned, and means were suggested for some systematic and efficient relief. Some cases were related which called for immediate aid. The case of one young man, in particular, awakened my sympathy, and I devoted the next forenoon to an effort to find him. I was at length directed to a large open lot bordering upon the shore, and covered with bales, boxes, and barrels of goods of all descriptions. After walking up and down over this lot, I could discover no object of distress, or no place where he could have found a resting-place, and gave up the pursuit. Three days afterward, as I was standing at the door of a store opposite this lot, a small crowd gathered there, and were looking at some object with intense interest. I crossed over, and there, beneath a hide stretched over two boxes, and crouched down between these boxes, was the corpse of the poor man I had sought, who had died there unfriended and alone. His head was leaning upon his hand, placed upon an edge of the box. No one could have supposed that a human body was concealed there. I had twice passed by that very spot in my search for him. The least groan could have been heard from the street. At the religious meeting I have mentioned, held beneath the tent chapel of the Presbyterian church, it was stated that there had been lately twelve cases of suicide in San Francisco. Yesterday a young man from New England left his tent in "Happy Valley," and went to a retired place, untied his cravat and hung it upon the bushes, took a razor from its case, and put the case upon his cravat, and then deliberately cut his own throat. Pecuniary losses, it is supposed, was the cause.

The house in which I have passed my time since I came to the city is one occupied by Rev. Mr. W., in the suburbs—soon to be the heart of the city. Across the street from us are some canvas tents, and below these a shed-house, in which is kept a restaurant; then comes a house made of hides stretched over a frame, and still lower down are more tents, adobe and frame houses, containing men, women, and children from all parts of the world. And there below me extends, far away, the noble bay, covered with its ships from all nations, to which new arrivals are daily added. Throngs of people, horses, wagons, oxen, carts, and mules, are ever passing. And this moment there goes toward the "Presidio" a heavy piece of ordnance. Here follow two merry young Americans on horseback, each with a gayly-dressed signorita before him, both without bonnets, and laughing merrily; and hear those glad and happy shouts of children! Stretched away before me is the world of San Francisco—and what a world! How the tide of human life flows and dashes upon its shores! Crowds every day arrive, and other crowds every day leave. Old friends meet, exchange a few words, and hasten on to the shrine of *Mammon.* Multitudes die, the waves close over them, and they are forgotten. It can hardly be supposed that people come to California *to live,* since they are here only *preparing to live*—much less do they come here *to die.* I pray that my life may be spared till I return to a land of friends, and where man is united to man by the sympathies of life!

The indifference of a class of the population here even to the lives of others, was illustrated by the grave-digger, who has generally to dig eight or more graves in a day, but yesterday only having three ordered, he cursed the Yankees for cheating him out of half his day's earnings.

Last evening I walked around to about fifty of the gambling tables. A volume could not describe their splendor or their fatal attractions. The halls themselves are vast and magnificent, spread over with tables and implements for gambling. The pictures which decorate them no pen of mine shall describe. The bar-rooms are furnished with the most expensive liquors, no care or attention being spared in the *compounding and coloring* of them. The music is performed often by professors, and is of the best kind. The tables are sometimes graced, or disgraced, by females, who came at first masked, and who are employed to deal the cards, or who come to play on their own account. "The Bank" consists of a solid pile of silver coin, surmounted by the golden currency of as many countries as there are dupes about the table. Often a sack or two of bullion, which has cost the poor miner months of labor, is placed upon the top of all. Sufficient money to send one home independent changed owners during my short stay. A boy of ten years came to one of the tables with a few dollars. His "run of luck" was surprising, and to him bewildering. In ten minutes he was the owner of a *pile* of silver, with some gold. In one minute more he was without a dollar. Thinking by one turn of the cards to double his profits, he lost the whole. The instances of great good luck on the part of the players are very rare. But they sometimes occur. A lawyer of this city recently swept three tables in one evening. A young man came from the States in one of the last steamers, and was preparing to go to the mines. He borrowed ten dollars, and went to one of the faro banks. During the night and a part of the next forenoon, he had won $7000, when he made a resolution never to play more, and returned home in the next steamer. Mr. Davidson, the agent of the Rothschilds, says that some of the professed gamblers send home by him to England the average sum of $17,000 a month. Many tricks are resorted to in order to bring persons to the table. An eye-witness assures me that he has seen the president of the bank slip secretly into the hand of some one, employed for the purpose of decoying others, a quantity of coin. On receiving this, he would leave the room, but soon return, and present himself in a noisy manner at the table, and boldly "plank down" the very money he had received. In five minutes the table would be surrounded by eager players.

There are but few women yet in California. Several merchants, and others who intend to spend some years in the country, send for their families. But the situation of these ladies is not the most comfortable, owing to the want of society, and to the utter impossibility of procuring servants in the family. By the death of their husbands, the condition of the wives would be pitiable, though there seem to be enough who would persuade them to change their solitary life as soon as possible. A lady now in this city, soon after her arrival here lost her husband. Before he had been dead a week, she received three proposals of marriage.

The price of labor is yet very high, though not as high as it was in the spring. Good carpenters and masons command their $8 a day. The citizens frequently send their clothes to the Sandwich and Society Islands, and even to Valparaiso, and other places on the coast, to be washed, to avoid the great expense for washing here. All kinds of goods are lower than they were a few months since. Coal, which was $100, is now $9 a ton. Vegetables have fallen from $1 to 25 cts. a lb. Eggs maintain their high price, selling at $20 a dozen.

After much inquiry, we have determined to go, for our next mining season, to the southern mines. We are led to this determination chiefly on account of the better health enjoyed there.

CHAPTER IV.

SOUTHERN MINES.

Having made our preparations, and engaged passage on board a schooner for Stockton, on the 19th day of October we started. Our company was made up chiefly of young gentlemen from Boston. Our sail up the bays and the San Joaquin River was accomplished in six days. We furnished our own provisions, which, owing to the length of our journey, proved insufficient. Notwithstanding the very heavy dews, we were compelled to sleep on deck. In consequence, one of our company took so severe a cold that he returned to San Francisco from Stockton, abandoning mining; while another, a young man from Uxbridge—alas! will disregard all the earnest advice of his friends to return, and will go on, a doomed man—will reach the mines, and we shall there leave him in his grave. Poor C., may his sad story be a warning to multitudes of young men, having good business and good prospects at home, to remain there, contented with small, but steady and sure gains! Sad, sad was his fate to be, for we were soon to bury him, in sight, and within a few yards of those rich deposites, the exaggerated accounts of which are now luring him, and will lure so many others to their ruin! Poor friend! even the hardened muleteers, having charge of our provisions, pity his sorrows, and walk themselves, that they may supply a mule for his faltering and fainting steps. All see death in his haggard countenance and sunken eyes, yet *he sees it not.* Never shall I forget my interview with him, while I walked by the mule on which he was riding, a few days only before his death. He was telling me of the bright and happy future before him. Taking from his vest pocket a daguerreotype, he placed it in my hands, requesting me to open it. What simplicity, what truth were portrayed in that lovely countenance! Well might he think his future a happy one. I could hardly conceal from him my emotion as I returned his priceless treasure, and thought, *never* will you take to your bosom the loving and the loved! In a few days I communicated to his friends the intelligence of his death.

Stockton, Oct. 25th. An escape so remarkable occurred to-day that it should not be omitted. Calling at the store of Paige & Webster to purchase provisions, I stood conversing with the clerk, the bag containing the supplies lying at my feet. Thinking the string was loose, I stooped over to examine it. At that very moment there was the sharp crack of a pistol in the store adjoining, and separated only by a cloth partition. On rising hastily, I perceived that the bullet had passed through the tent directly in range of my body. Without moving, I took the measurement, and found that, had I not moved the *very second* I did, the ball must have gone directly through my heart. It passed within an inch or two of my spine. A little crowd were instantly upon the spot, wondering at this almost miraculous escape.

Our journey from Stockton to Marepoosa, a distance of one hundred and twenty miles, was accomplished between Oct. 27th and Nov. 15th. We took our own provisions and cooking utensils with us, there being few eating tents on the way. After three days' travel the rainy season set in, and we found it necessary to pitch our tents—sometimes doing this in the mud, spreading down our blankets upon the wet and cold ground, there to remain for two or three days. After we had crossed the plain of the San Joaquin and entered among the mountains, we had fine scenery and beautiful sunsets. Our guide was endeavoring to take us by a new track to the mines, and on our march, Nov. 2d, we were lost among the mountains. After a consultation, the guide and muleteers concluded to cross a high mountain, without a path and very steep. In ascending, two of the mules missed their footing, rolling over and over, down the precipitous sides of the hill, till arrested uninjured by some rock or stump. By the time we had reached the summit of the mountain, and passed across an extent of table-land to an abrupt bluff, at the foot of which was to be seen the beautiful Tuolumne, night had crept upon us. With the night came torrents of rain, driving through our thin canvas roof in a shower of large drops. During the night I was conscious of a sensation of coldness which had completely benumbed me. When sufficiently awake to ascertain the cause, I found that, owing to the unevenness of the ground, I had slid down till my feet were immersed in a cold bath outside the tent. All the next day we kept our tent, amusing ourselves by reading, sewing, and conversing. The morning after, the clouds had disappeared, and the sun rose in splendor. The birds sang their most enlivening songs. It was like our May at home. On walking out of our tents, we perceived the huge foot-prints of the grisly bear at just twenty-six paces distant, and there were the holes where he had scratched up the ground in pursuit of the ants and bugs, which he devours with avidity. The centipedes and tarantulas occasioned us no little apprehension and uneasiness. After the rain commenced, we frequently found them between and under our blankets.

On one of the mornings of our march, my feet being lame, I started in advance of the train, that I might take time to rest, not expecting to see the party again till they overtook me at the end of the day's march. When I left, all preparations for a start had been made, and the muleteers had gone out for their mules. Two of them, however, were missing, and so much of the day was spent before they were found, that the guide concluded to remain in camp till the next morning. Upon reaching the spring where I supposed we were to encamp, and having quenched my thirst, hungry and weary, I went to a large and shady tree a short distance from the path, and sat down to await my companions. For some time I occupied my mind with reading the "Pilgrim's Progress," which I had in my pocket. Soon, however, Bunyan's dream began to mingle with my own, and I fell into a long, deep sleep. When I awoke, bewildered and confused, it was near night, and nowhere were my companions to be seen. Had they passed me during the day, and gone on to the next encampment, or had some accident delayed them, were becoming anxious questions to me. I perceived, by new tracks, that several trains had passed while I was asleep. Was mine one of them? I determined—why, I hardly know—to retrace my morning steps. But soon a new source of anxiety arose. My course in the morning had been across a plain at the foot of the mountains, till at length it brought me up among them. As I descended the last steeps of these, and saw the plain extended out below me, far in the distance, and very far from the trail I had come, I saw a mule-train which I thought must be mine, and concluded that I had been all this time wandering out of my way. Fixing their direction in my mind before descending upon the plain, and while the sun was setting, I struck across, leaving my path, and hoping to intersect theirs by the time they should come into camp. If I could not effect this, I must spend the night without food, or water, or blankets, with also the prospect of being *lost* among the mountains. This, in my situation, would be attended with much inconvenience and some danger. Several have been lost in this manner, and never seen again. At length I succeeded in reaching the train, and found it was not mine; but I had the satisfaction of hearing from my companions, and that they were still at their last night's camp. At about ten o'clock I reached our encampment. Tired and hungry as I was, I stood for some time struck with the scene before me. In addition to the usual camp-fires, giving to every thing a wild, gipsy-like air, my friends had cut down a large tree, and, piling up all the branches and a quantity of dry fuel, had made a grand bonfire. The whole country about was lighted up. Hastening to the camp, I first snatched up the coffee-pot, and, finding it half full, began to drink heartily of the contents, too thirsty to judge of its quality. When I joined the cheerful party around the blazing fire, I was appealed to to decide a question which they had been and still were eagerly discussing. The subject was one which, being brought up under our circumstances, and at such a distance from home, was calculated to awaken a lively interest. It was respecting the comparative merits of the Boston Common and the New York Battery, and was agitated by young miners from those cities.

As we approach the mines, accounts vary greatly as to the prospects of the miners. Those who are, like ourselves, going toward the Marepoosa diggings, hear a thousand exaggerated stories of success; but the multitude who are already leaving this region for other mines bring back the most discouraging reports. As we have found it elsewhere, so it is here; at a distance—in Stockton, in San Francisco, in the States, the Marepoosa diggings are regarded as very rich, and are thought by some to be the ancient Ophir. Now that we are within a few miles, the enchantment which distance lends has vanished. It is found that, in general, the miners are not making a living. At the River Mercedes we saw some Indians, called Savage's Indians, from an American with that name, who shot the chief and took his place in the tribe. He was formerly a companion of Colonel Fremont. These Indians were fishing for salmon, at which business they are very expert and successful. All the Indians in the country are *openly* friendly, but their friendship is not to be trusted. They have acquired a growing distrust of the emigrant miners, so often are they made the subjects of the most cruel and barbarous impositions. To me their whole deportment appears threatening. Even when they come into our camps with presents or to trade, their conduct says plainly, "We bide our time!" (It may be delayed, but the time will come when they will seek revenge; and woe be to those who are among these wild mountain fastnesses when that fearful time comes!)

I have seen but few birds among the mountains of California. The large French woodpecker is the most common. It feeds upon the acorn, of which it lays up immense supplies after they have fallen from the trees. It can not put its stores in the ground, for the bears and squirrels would scratch them up and devour them. They pick a hole in the bark of the tree, of such a size that the acorn will exactly fit into it; then they fly down, and, taking one in the bill, drive it deep into the hole. There are thousands of these acorns sometimes in a single tree, which have the appearance of so many bullets shot into it. There is a singular species of the frog, similar to the "horned frog" of Texas. It is as large as the common frog, but covered with scales, with two of the same scales, but larger, protruding out from its head. There are abundance of elk, deer, and antelope; but the most remarkable animal is the grisly bear. This animal is eight to eleven feet in length, and four to six in girth. It is of a dark brown color, with long, shaggy hair. It possesses wonderful strength, and a single blow of its iron-clawed paw would fell an ox; yet it rarely attacks unless provoked. It never lies in wait for its prey. It is dangerous to attack him. Few persons have the hardihood, when alone, to fire upon him, and then look for a tree to which they may retreat.

We passed, on our way, through "Fremont's camp," where, a year since, the colonel had a large number of Indians working for him. It is now quite a settlement; and the very day we passed through, a company of sixty men was organized to pursue and punish the Indians for various depredations lately committed. Finding so little which was favorable in our prospect, we started for Sherlock's diggings, led by new stories of wonderful success. The two brothers Sherlock, who discovered this place, are said to have taken out $30,000 from a small square spot of ground. They went to Monterey to deposit their money and make preparations to continue their profitable labors. While there, in an unguarded manner, one day, they let fall some hints concerning their success. These were not lost upon two sailors belonging to a man-of-war then lying in the bay, and who happened to be present. They returned on board, asked and obtained a furlough for seven weeks, made their preparations, and when the Sherlocks started, they started also. It was not long before the Sherlocks suspected the purpose of the sailors, and, to elude them, very quietly arose at midnight, packed their mules, and silently proceeded on their way. What was their surprise in the morning to find their pursuers still following them. Every means was resorted to in order to avoid them or mislead their search, but all in vain. They were always *there*. Seeing that they were "in for it," they made a virtue of necessity, took the sailors with them, gave them valuable instructions, and every assistance in their power. A few weeks since, and before the expiration of their furlough, the two sailors returned on board with ninety pounds of gold.

Here we encountered severe hardships, camping in leaky tents, upon wet and muddy ground, from which we raised ourselves only by spreading down pine boughs beneath us; being chilled with the cold rain and snow. Yesterday a friend was seated by me upon a log at the opening of the tent. "Oh!" said he, "let me be at home with my wife and little daughter, and I will live on one meal a day. I have often wondered," he continued, "how the poor Irish *could live* in their hovels, but look here at *our home!* Their situation is Paradise compared to ours! My wife would cry herself to death if she could see what I suffer!"

Nov. 16th. To-day we commenced our labors at Sherlock's, contracting to pay $5 a day for an old cradle, while the sum total of our first day's labor has been one dollar. One of my companions amused us by telling us, while speaking of the wrong ideas those form of the mines who have never seen them, the advice his father gave him. He told him not to work too hard, but to buy a low chair and a small iron rake, and, taking his seat, to rake over the sand, and, picking up the pieces of gold as they came to view, to put them in a box.

Nov. 17th. The sum total made to-day is 25 cents; and this when provisions are selling at $1 25 a pound, with the prospect of being still higher. We returned this evening to our camp tired and hungry, and, finding very little here to eat, have put on a kettle of acorns to boil, upon which, with a little venison, we shall make our supper. There are many depredations committed by the Indians. Mules are stolen, and driven away to be eaten.

Nov. 19th. To-day we have made 50 cents each. This evening, as I was passing through the village on my way to the trading-tent, I perceived an old, drunken sailor cooking some nice steaks from the grisly bear. I had never yet tasted the meat, and when I expressed a curiosity to do this, a tin plate, with a generous slice of the savory meat, was placed before me on the ground, with a bottle of brandy. The latter I eschewed, while the former I chewed, and found it delicious—similar to young pork. While we were enjoying the feast, the old sailor related to me a remarkable instance of success in his own case a few days before. His account was corroborated by others, who gave me some particulars which he withheld. He was walking, or rather staggering, for he had been drinking pretty deeply, upon the bank, below which the miners were hard at work. As he was thus proceeding, singing as he went, he kicked his foot against a stone, causing it to roll over. Turning around, and at the same time raising his clinched fist, he began to curse the stone, when his attention and oaths were all arrested together, for he saw at the bottom of the hole from which the stone was displaced something yellow and bright. In an instant he was upon his knees, knife in hand, and soon held up a beautiful lump of nearly pure gold, valued at $500. In one week he had drank and gambled the whole away. Such instances as this have given rise to the opinion among the miners that the worthless, drinking, and gambling characters have better success than the sober and persevering laborer.

Nov. 21st. It is now about seven months since my last letter from my family. My feelings may then be imagined when, late yesterday afternoon, I heard there were letters for me at Fremont's camp, eight miles distant, over the mountain. Although suffering greatly from blistered feet, I started early this morning, after passing a sleepless night. Alas! what was my disappointment at finding my letters were from San Francisco, soliciting the votes and influence of our company in favor of the election of a candidate to some office! Indeed, it is not surprising that, amid such trials and hardships, so many become disheartened, and resort to forbidden and fatal pleasures and stimulants.

Dec. 1st. Finding all our efforts unavailing, and that none around us were succeeding, we visited Aqua Frio some days since, and have now removed here. There does not appear to be much doing here, but it is a larger settlement, but few now remaining at Sherlock's. It is, on this account, more safe from the encroachments of the Indians, and provisions are more easily obtained. These are, however, constantly rising. Each dash of rain adds one or two shillings a pound to the price of every article. This is owing to the fact that, as the rains render the roads worse, the price for transportation proportionally increases. We are now paying $1 50 a pound for provisions. The price of a barrel of flour here would go far toward supporting a family at home for a year. Four pounds of hard, moldy bread for our mule cost us about $6. And yet, with these high prices, the miners in the best diggings in the region do not average $1 50 a day. We have not done this.

Dec. 3d. Lying awake in my tent last night, I overheard three miners, who had come in partially intoxicated at midnight to their tent, within a few feet of us, talking over their plans. It seemed that one of them had just weighed the gold they had made that day, and found it nine ounces. They were to be up early, and start for the same place again. I conformed my movements to theirs the next forenoon, with an experienced miner for a companion. With our picks and spades, we soon reached the place where they were at work. They were in the middle of the channel, having turned the stream from its course, up to their knees in the mud and water, while one of their number was constantly employed in "bailing out." We prospected near them for a few hours, as they told us many others had done, unsuccessfully. They did not themselves expect to find employment for more than two days, the deposit already beginning to fail.

Dec. 4th. There was a large fall of snow last night, which pressed so heavily upon our tent that it fell in upon us; but we kept our beds till morning, the bank of snow above us adding not a little to the warmth of our blankets. I went down, after breakfast, to the diggings, and brushing away the snow, and breaking the ice, attempted to wash out some gold in a pan; but I made nothing. Becoming thoroughly chilled, with my hands and feet frostbitten, I returned to my tent; but here it is almost as bad. The canvas, of which our tent is made, is under the snow, our provisions *scarce*, the fire out, and the day very cold. Two of my companions, feeling the pressure of hunger, went to the tent of an acquaintance, where they found some venison steaks and bread, which had been left at breakfast. They made their dinner from these, being comforted by the thought that some ciote or stray dog would bear the blame. What renders our situation more deplorable is the want of proper clothing. Good boots are so scarce that $96 are readily given for a pair.

A miner related in my hearing to-day the manner in which he employed others to work for him. He marked off a claim ten feet square, and commenced digging in one corner of it. Finding it likely to be a more serious job than he anticipated, and being tired of it, and yet not willing to abandon it without knowing what lay at the bottom, he concealed several pieces of gold, one weighing two ounces, in a corner of his claim. Watching his opportunity when several persons were near, he artfully uncovered one of the lumps, seeming, at the same time, anxious to conceal it. In a few moments several spectators were eyeing his movements. Soon he turned up two or three more small pieces, and then the larger one. In ten minutes the ground all about him was marked off, and many picks and shovels were employed in prospecting for him, while he went back to his tent, pleased with the success of his maneuver. Several good offers were made him for his claim, and, had he been so disposed, he might have made a good bargain; but he was satisfied with the amount of labor he thus procured. In many cases the grossest impositions have been practiced. Persons have scattered gold in the dirt of a claim they held, then have offered it for a high price, exhibiting a pan full of the rich soil as a specimen. We have now spent many days at Aqua Frio without finding any prospect of success; on the contrary, being involved in debt; and have determined to break up our camp, and, disposing of our tents, cooking utensils, &c., to retrace our steps toward Stockton. One of our company is disposed a little longer to try his fortunes—or rather his misfortunes—at the Marepoosa mines. Another remains in his lonely grave. All the others, excepting myself, intend to return to San Francisco, and, as soon as they are able, to leave for home.

On Monday, Dec. 10th, we started with a mule-train bound for Stockton, which took a few pounds of freight for us, while I packed twenty pounds upon my back. The first day we traveled fifteen miles over the mountains, and saw hundreds going to and from the mines. Burns's tent was so filled with travelers that we were compelled to sleep out in the open air, which was so severely cold that the water froze by our side. The next night we slept at Montgomery's ranch, after walking twenty-three miles. Spreading our blankets down upon the ground, beneath a canvas roof, we slept so closely packed that no person could have stepped between us. For breakfast we had tea, hard bread, beans, and pork, and a few pickles, for all which we paid $2 each. The following day we traveled in the rain twenty-five miles, fording the Tuolumne. My companions had all dropped behind, half frozen and tired out, seeking shelter and rest in some trading or eating tents we had passed. I pushed on with the mule-train, hoping at night to reach a comfortable shelter; but night found us completely exhausted, and far from any settlement. The company traveling with the mule-train had a tent, but there was no spare room which they could offer me. I had to make up my mind to spend the night alone in the drenching rain, and it was a night I shall never forget. A large log-fire was burning, by which I sat till a late hour, when I happened to remember that I had seen a large hollow tree by the road side, at some little distance from our camp. Taking a blazing brand, I went and examined the tree, and found that the hollow would afford my body a shelter by sitting upright, and leaving my feet exposed to the rain. I kindled a fire, collecting some brush and bark with which to replenish it during the night. Then, with the ax I had borrowed, I removed a quantity of dead leaves and filthy rubbish accumulated at the bottom of my cavern. To my alarm, I found among this rubbish fresh marks of a large bear, which had lately found refuge here from a storm such as now drove me to its shelter. But there seemed no alternative, and I thought, besides, that my fire would be a protection against wild beasts; so I wrapped my blankets about me, and, sinking down into my novel bed, with my feet in a cold bath, I listened to the pattering of the rain, thinking of those far away. Soon my fire began to fail, and I had placed the last piece of bark upon it, and fallen asleep. When I awoke it was pouring in torrents, and my fire was entirely out. Then came thoughts of the bear, and I instinctively drew in my legs, not wishing to place temptation within his reach, should he be prowling about me. It would not do; I was nearly frozen; the water began to find its way into my bed, which I apprehended I should soon be compelled to share with old Bruin. Then it was so dark. I got up, took my blankets over my arm, and started to return to the log-fire, which I saw dimly burning in the distance. In my haste, I forgot that there was a bend in the bank of the stream below us, making it necessary for me to take a circuit round in order to reach my companions. I soon found myself lodged among the bushes and stones at the bottom of the bank. Then came over me a nervous feeling like a nightmare, and I could already feel myself in the grasp of the grisly bear—his claws and teeth were in my flesh. Dropping my ax, and every thing but my blankets, and losing one of my shoes, I began an imaginary scramble and flight from my imaginary pursuer. The remainder of the night I passed, wrapped up in my blankets, by the log-fire. A walk of twelve miles the day following brought me to the Stanislaus, where I was to separate from my companions, who had not yet come up—they going on to Stockton, and I to the Stanislaus diggings. The rain continued to pour down. Little dreamed our friends at home of our situation then! With scarcely a dollar in our pockets, a long journey before us, cold, hungry, and wet, our oppressed hearts were ready to sink. Alas! little did I anticipate what a gloomy future was before two of those companions! One of them was the only and the idolized son of his parents, and tenderly and dearly loved by his sisters. His home possessed every comfort and convenience. He had come far from his father's house to perish with hunger. He resolved, "I will arise and go to my father." But that father and that heart-broken mother he was no more to see. A year after we parted—and oh! what a year of suffering and privation must that have been—with that companion of his boyhood and youth, he reached Chagres in most destitute circumstances. To raise money enough to take him home, he engaged as a boatman on the river, took the fever, and died. In consequence of my recent exposure, I had a severe cold, and was entirely unable to travel; yet I had no means of paying my expenses at a ranch. Under these circumstances, I crossed the Stanislaus, went to the ranch of Mr. George Islip, a gentleman from Canada, and told him my situation. "Give yourself no uneasiness," he said; "you are welcome as long as you choose to remain with us; all I request of you is that you will feel yourself at home." I passed a very pleasant week with this noble-hearted man, and was treated as a brother. The wind had blown down his house, and torn the canvas roof to ribbons, and we were without shelter from the pelting rain; but warm fires, kept up in the middle of the temporary shelter, made us comfortable. To protect my body from the rain, I would creep under the table, managing to keep my feet near the fire. After a week of interesting and wild adventure, I was set over the river by my friend, and started for the mines again. The roads were very muddy, and the streams forded with difficulty. In my first day's walk I passed three wagons which were mired—a common occurrence at this season of the year. There were many dead animals by the road side. My Christmas eve I spent most cheerlessly at Green Spring, and the next day reached Woods's diggings. On the 26th Dec. I visited Sullivan's diggings, Jamestown, Yorktown, and Curtis's Creek. A residence in this portion of the mines was, in every way, more desirable than in the more distant mines at this season. Provisions were cheaper, and there was less danger of attacks from the Indians. All the places I have mentioned, together with the Chinese diggings, Mormon Gulch, Sonora, and others, were a cluster of mines lying near to each other, and between the Stanislaus and Tuolumne Rivers. At each of these places were trading tents and dwellings of the miners, chiefly of canvas, with some log and hide houses, and one or two frame buildings. Sonora is the principal of these, the residence chiefly of Mexicans and Chilinos, of whom there are some twelve thousand. Here are furnished provisions, clothing, tools, &c., at almost as low rates as at Stockton. Its hotels, restaurants, and trading tents presented a very busy appearance; and there is no place in the mines where gambling is so much *the business.* Some comfortable houses have been erected here. After visiting all the mines, and finding but indifferent prospects at any of them, I located myself at Curtis's Creek, to labor in the winter diggings. I was without a companion, and had heard of a gentleman from New England who was desirous of sharing his tent and provisions with some one. He had been out of health, but was supposed to be improving. My name had been mentioned to him by a friend before I arrived, and he had expressed a desire to enter into such an arrangement as might be of mutual advantage. He was considered a man of great intelligence and worth; and it was partly with the hope of having him as a mining companion that I had visited Curtis's. His tent was a mile from the settlement. Taking my roll of blankets, I walked over to see him. Judge of my surprise, on reaching his tent, and raising the curtains at the entrance, and stepping in, to find myself standing before a *corpse*, laid out upon a hammock! I learned from a colored man, who soon came in, that Mr. H. had died half an hour before. He was alone, and seemed to have just been reaching from his bed for something. The last sentiment to which he gave utterance was, "I believe I left home a moral and a religious man; I have brought morality and religion with me, and, with God's assistance, I will keep them to the last." Neither he nor others supposed that he was dangerously sick. With the black man, I went out, and we selected a spot beneath a large tree, and there we dug his grave. The noon of the next day was the time named for the funeral, and notice accordingly was sent to the various mines near by. It being impracticable to provide a coffin, the body was wrapped in several blankets, and a quantity of pine boughs spread at the bottom of the grave. At the time appointed for the burial, most of the miners might be seen leaving their various employments, and slowly walking in small groups toward the grave. Another group—the bearers and friends—met them, and all proceeded together on the way. How solemn and impressive, under those circumstances, "the burial service" of the Church, which was then performed. An appropriate hymn was sung, and the body laid in its last repose, then covered with pine boughs, and the grave was filled up. Having purchased the tent and a part of the provisions, I spent the two following days, assisted by a friend—young Dr. R., of New Jersey—in removing the tent, and preparing for the labors of mining. On the Sunday following—the 30th Dec.—I was requested to go over to Woods's diggings and attend the funeral of a young man from Philadelphia. We had formerly both listened together to the faithful preaching of the Rev. Mr. Fowles. Could it have been anticipated, as I fixed my eye upon that healthy, intelligent countenance at the close of the services, that in the wilds of California I should so soon be called to pronounce over him the solemn sentence—in this case sadly solemn—"*Earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust!*" The brother of young A. was with him at the mines, but he died alone. The next morning, the last of the year, Dr. R. and myself started upon a prospecting excursion; and we returned at night as wise, as rich, and a little more tired than we were when we left in the morning.

Jan. 1st, 1850. It has rained hard all day. Engaged in washing and mending clothes, cooking, writing, and reading. Before we separated for the night, my friend, Dr. R., requested me to conduct "family worship." It was a simple request and a simple act, like every act of faith, and appropriate to our situation and to the day, being the first of the year. Only those who have experienced it, especially in a situation like ours, know of the refreshing fountain of comfort which springs up in the soul while kneeling before the throne of "our Father in heaven." It was family prayer; and we realized the delightful import of this expression. The Being to whom we addressed our prayers was at that moment looking with an eye of love upon each member of our dear families at home, and our prayers would bring peace, protection, and blessings to them. It was family prayer; and at that moment we felt the privilege of being united with the great and happy family that worship the glorious and good Being who loves and cares for all.

Jan. 2d. During the last night there was a robbery in the settlement, which caused great excitement. A miner, formerly from Ohio, but who had been many years in Oregon, where he had a pleasant home, had been induced, by the hope of making a rapid fortune, to sell his valuable property, and, taking his large family, to remove to the mines. There, by hard labor and trading, he had laid up about $4000. Most of this sum was in a trunk at the foot of the bed in their tent. During the night this trunk was taken, and the next morning was found at some distance, broken open, and the money gone. A boarder was immediately arrested on suspicion, but, after a well-conducted trial, was released. We have made 37 cents each.

Jan. 3d. It has rained hard most of the day, and there was some thunder, a very unusual occurrence in California. Spent a part of the day and all the evening with Dr. R., singing, reading, &c. At the close of our pleasant interview, again we "lifted the heart and bent the knee" in prayer to Almighty God. In our visits to each other on these rainy days, like the ladies at home, we often take our sewing with us. To-day I took a pair of stockings to darn, one of my shoes to mend, and the "Democratic Review" to read. While we plied our needles, our tongues were equally busy speaking of mutual friends and hopes.

Jan. 4th. It has been clear to-day, but, owing to the high state of the water, we could do but little. I have been favored with an introduction to Captain Wadsworth, of Connecticut, a descendant of the captain of the same name who is famous for having concealed the charter of the colony in the Charter Oak.

He cordially invited me to share with him a pleasant house which he had spent some weeks in building, and which was more comfortable than any thing I had seen in the mines. The house was about ten feet square, inclosed by split rails, driven into the ground perpendicularly side by side, and filled in with clay, the whole covered with a tight canvas roof stretched over the rafters. The chimney was large, and, when well filled with blazing wood, imparted an air of comfort to every thing. We enjoyed luxuries uncommon in the mines—a table and chairs. I soon found myself at home here.

Jan. 5th. It rained again; but we could not afford to be idle, though we made a mere trifle by severe and exposing labor. To-night we have weighed our week's earnings, and find that they amount to $1 80. It is more trying to the miner to be compelled to spend a day in idleness than to engage in the most severe labor, even though that labor be unprofitable. I have often been driven out by my own anxious thoughts to work in a severe rain.

Jan. 6th, Sunday. A cloudy, unpleasant day. This forenoon, made a "duff;" but what was to be done for a string with which to tie the bag? I looked every where, but in vain. At last I thought of my shoe-string, which I used for this purpose. When all was ready, I found that the duff was too large for the kettle, so I boiled one end first, and then turned the other, and boiled that.

Jan. 7th. Prospected with Captain Wadsworth at the Chilian diggings. This is an open, level field, through which a stream formerly ran, but which now has so little water that many of the miners take the dirt to the river to be washed. Here was a large settlement of Chilinos, who have come from their own gold mines to try their fortune here. They often bring their families with them. I saw one family, the father of which, assisted by the older children, was "panning out" gold on a stream near his rude home made of hides. The mother was washing clothes, while the infant was swinging in a basket made fast to the branches overhead. An interesting girl of five years, with a tiny pick and spade, was digging in a hole, already sunk two feet, and putting the dirt in a pan, which she would take to the stream and wash, putting the scale or two of gold into a dipper a little larger than a thimble. A heavy rain drove us home, wet and cold. It continued to rain, with a few intervals, during the remainder of the week; but a trunk of valuable books, owned by Captain Wadsworth, served to occupy our minds. These employments, with the writing of letters, singing, roasting our coffee, cooking, visiting, &c., filled up the hours of these rainy days. We have made, the whole week, $3 each.

I must again remind my reader that, if these details are uninteresting, they are yet necessary as the filling up of a miner's life. The bright and glowing pictures presented to the public—the "news from California"—"$2,000,000 in gold-dust"—"rich discoveries"—"new diggings," &c., must all be filled up with a back-ground of cloudy days, of rainy weeks, broken hopes, privations, sickness, many a gloomy death-scene, and many a lonely grave. With how much surprise, and often indignation, do the miners read the "accounts from the mines," which come back to them in the newspapers from home! And with how much satisfaction do they read the few truthful descriptions which they meet.

Jan. 13th, Sunday. The roads were so impassable to-day, from the late rains, that I was unable to preach a funeral sermon at Woods's, as I had promised. There was preaching at Curtis's in the forenoon, by a Methodist, who gave us a good sermon, its only fault being its great length. At the close, he invited all so disposed to attend a class-meeting. Among others, a German, having an imperfect acquaintance with our language, was called upon for his "experience." With some reluctance and hesitation, he arose, and said these few words: "I find religion good when I do my duty; and when I don't do my duty, I find religion bad; but *I shall try to try!*" In the afternoon I selected for my reading-desk and pulpit the stump of a tree which had been cut down, on a level spot, in the midst of the settlement. The logs and large branches of this tree had not yet been removed for fire-wood, and furnished seats for my congregation. Our worship was very primitive, and the whole scene would have been impressive to one of our assemblies at home; but we remembered, to our edification, that God looks not upon the outward appearance, but upon the heart. The singing was excellent, conducted by a professor from the Boston Academy. After the preaching, I invited all who wished to join a choir for mutual improvement in singing to remain. A good number were present, and the professor was duly elected chorister. Our arrangement was to meet before worship on Sunday, and on Wednesday evenings, and devote two hours to this delightful employment Those hours I shall not soon forget. Sometimes, when some old familiar tune was sung, which brought each one's home circle before his mind, silent but eloquent tears would start in many eyes.

Jan. 14th. In company with Captain W. and Dr. R., selected a spot where a mountain ravine opens into the river, and a few yards below the place where a company of Frenchmen took out, a few months since, a large amount of gold. Our best prospect was in the channel of this mountain stream. We spent some hours in diverting the stream from its course by a dam and a canal on a small scale. Then, by bailing, we succeeded in opening the channel. Most of the upper soil, with the stones, must be removed, nearly to the primitive rock below, often a distance of some feet, always ankle or knee deep in the mud. We were greatly encouraged, in the present instance, by an indication of gold rarely presented. About four inches from the surface of the ground, and in the loose upper soil, I found a lump of gold weighing nearly three pennyweights. Greatly cheered by this circumstance, we worked away with spade and pick, with cradle and pan, hour after hour, and were rewarded by finding in our treasury at night a few bright scales of gold, amounting to 25 cents.

Jan. 15th. This morning, notwithstanding the rain, we were again at our work. We *must* work. In sunshine and rain, in warm and cold, in sickness and health, successful or not successful, early and late, it is work, *work*, WORK! *Work or perish!* All around us, above and below, on mountain side and stream, the rain falling fast upon them, are the miners at work—not for *gold*, but for *bread*. Lawyers, doctors, clergymen, farmers, soldiers, deserters, good and bad, from England, from America, from China, from the Islands, from every country but Russia and Japan—all, all at work at their cradles. From morning to night is heard the incessant rock, rock, rock! Over the whole mines, in streamlet, in creek, and in river, down torrent and through the valley, ever rushes on the muddy sediment from ten thousand busy rockers. Cheerful words are seldom heard, more seldom the boisterous shout and laugh which indicate success, and which, when heard, sink to a lower ebb the spirits of the unsuccessful. We have made 50 cents each.

Jan. 16th. A friend put into my hands to-day a copy of the Boston Journal. We laid it aside to read in the evening. But how was this to be accomplished? The luxury of a candle we could not afford. Our method was this: we cut and piled up a quantity of dry brush in a corner near the fire, and after supper, while one put on the brush and kept up the blaze, the other would read; and as the blaze died away, so would the voice of the reader. Our work to-day has amounted to 80 cents each.

Jan. 17th. A very rainy, cold day. As Captain W. is sorely afflicted with an eruption, which covers his whole body, probably the effects of having handled the "poison oak," which grows over the whole country, we conclude to remain in, and finish the paper. Cutaneous diseases are cured by the use of the soap-plant—*amole*. Captain W. has tried it to-day, and been greatly benefited. We use it in bathing, washing clothes, dishes, &c.

Jan. 18th. It has continued to rain. There has been some excitement in a ravine near where we were at work. A company of six men found a place from which they have taken out $18 to each every day through the week. The place is now thronged. Every foot is taken up; and yet, of the hundreds there, not five have made more than their living. Some only made 12½ cents. We have worked there to-day, and made $2 each. This evening we have had a pleasant meeting of our choir.

Jan. 19th. A fine day. We have made $1 each. Upon the bank of Curtis's Creek, two men to-day opened a rich deposit, and have brought to their tent $105, while two others, hearing of their success, commenced just above, and a company of five more below them. Those above in a short time took out $64, and those below, $112. These instances of success, being talked of at noon, created a great excitement. This afternoon the bar presented a busy scene, and before night every foot of the lower part of the bar was marked off and claimed.

Jan. 20th, Sunday. The singing and religious services were held to-day in the trading-tent of Mr. Capps. My reading-desk was a brandy-cask; and perhaps this might be said in favor of the change—it had long enough been appropriated to the service of Satan, and its conversion to a better cause was not undesirable.

Jan. 21st. The report of the success on the bar below on Saturday has gone abroad and done its work. Many miners, much excited by the rumors, greatly exaggerated by passing through the mouths of the traders, have begun to come in. New tents are springing up, and new faces are seen; but success through the day has been confined to the one deposit, which proves to have run in a rich vein for some sixty feet, occasionally disappearing, but always coming up again in the same line. A company of six miners, from Illinois, made over four pounds of gold last week, then gave up their claim, supposing it exhausted, to some friends, who made three pounds more from it to-day.

Jan. 22d. In company with several experienced and successful miners, went to some of the tributaries of the Tuolumne. We had gone three miles from home, and were prospecting some of the higher ravines, the lower being too full of water. It had been cloudy when we started, but we were so accustomed to the rains of this country that we felt no concern; but about noon a severe, cold wind sprung up, driving before it a storm of snow. It came cutting and freezing into our faces. It was one of those evils which must be met. I carried a spade in one hand, and a crow-bar in the other; and that piece of cold iron penetrated into my soul. I thought I had never before experienced the sensation of pure, unrelieved *cold*. The ice-water into which I plunged my hands half an hour since, on my return, felt warm. We were not at all prepared for such an event. Ah! this mountain ramble, the heavy snow-flakes and hail pelting in our faces, our hands and feet almost frozen, have gone far toward curing us of any slight remains of the "yellow fever" which may have been clinging to us!

Jan. 23d. A clear and cold day. The ground is covered with snow. Alone I went to my cold and cheerless work. Those who are counting their bright yellow coins think little of the privations which have been undergone, the agonies which have been endured—think not of the living death, the dying life it has cost to draw from the mines their golden eagles. Made to-day 75 cents.

Jan. 24th. Last night it was intensely cold, and near morning commenced snowing, which it has continued to do the whole day. A mail-agent has come in to-day, and still no letters for me. It is now thirty-nine weeks since my last letter from home was dated. I would purchase one line from my wife with all the gold I have made during those thirty-nine weeks.

To-day, while a friend was seated by me, before Captain W.'s blazing fire, we were speaking of the great number of persons who come to the mines, and, after working a few days, become discouraged, and abandon mining. He related the following instance, which he knows to have taken place. A merchant from New York recently came up with high expectations, having made all his arrangements and preparations to carry on mining for one season. The fascinating interest which invests this whole subject at a distance had drawn him on. Being a strong and vigorous man, blessed with the grace of perseverance, he attributed the want of success, of which so many complained, to their indolence or want of energy. The question he frequently put, on his way to the mines, was, "How much may be made by *hard and persevering* labor?" as if he thought that *such* labor must succeed. He reached the mines—saw, on the bar below him, some miners *hard* at work. As he watched them, he thought, "That, indeed, is hard work, and here is an opportunity to judge for myself." He directed the muleteer to wait while he went down to the bar. There he saw the preparations which had been made for washing, the stones and dirt which had been removed before the gold could be reached. He saw the men at the bottom of the pit, knee deep in mud, filling the buckets. He followed those buckets to the cradle, watched the operation of washing the dirt through the cradle. As they prepared to wash down in pans, he inquired, "How many buckets of dirt have been washed to procure the gold now in the machine?" "Twenty-five," was the reply. "And how many buckets can be washed out in a day?" "Sometimes more and sometimes less; we wash out one hundred and fifty." "How many men in your company?" "Four." While these inquiries were going on, one of the company was panning down the gold, and brought it to where they were seated upon some rocks. "How much gold is there in that pan?" he eagerly inquired. One said there was $2, while the others thought there was not so much. It was weighed, and found to be $1 62. He could make his own calculations of their day's labor. The sum total was $9 72; for each of the four men, $2 43. He looked about him. There was all that pile of rubbish to be removed—enough to employ them the whole day—before they could wash the gold at all. "Where are your tents?" he asked. "We have none." "Where are your provisions?" "This money is to purchase them." "You had better purchase mine, which can be done cheap, as I shall be on my way to San Francisco in ten minutes." And to San Francisco he returned, and in three weeks was established in a commission auction store.

Jan. 28th. Since my last date it has rained constantly, and some of the time in torrents; but little work has been done. Yesterday a miner was tried for stealing a small amount of gold, and, upon conviction, was sentenced to receive five lashes, and to leave the mines in five days. Reports have been circulating among us of some large lumps of gold having been found at Sonora, one of which, it is asserted, weighs seventy pounds.

Jan. 29th. It is a lovely spring morning, but the water is so high it is impossible to work. The notes of the robin, the thrush, and the American nightingale are heard, bringing back thoughts of the homes we have left. The miners are beginning to talk of the summer diggings upon the rivers. Many parties have gone on exploring expeditions, and it is said that thousands of miners have all their provisions purchased, and but await the melting of the snow from the mountains to cross over and take possession of the *real* El Dorado. Very little is doing here. We are not averaging a dollar a day on the whole creek. A gentleman from New England has just been telling me that he left a business, when he came from home, which enabled him to lay up $500 a year; but that, since he left home, which is now over a year, he has not made $200. Surely not enough to support him. A newspaper, which has strayed into the mines to-day, brings the astounding intelligence of the murder of Dr. Parkman, and the arrest and trial of Professor Webster as the murderer.

Feb. 2d. Prospected to-day with Mr. L., of Livingston Manor, upon the Hudson River. Mr. L. has a quiet, easy way, as he is seated upon some rock, examining the dirt, and turning over the stones at the bottom of some hole, which gives the impression to any one who may happen to be looking on from a distance that he is picking up pieces of gold. We were thus seated to-day, and he was scraping the clay from a stone, and showed me several small scales, when two miners, who had been working all day above us, hurried down, and eagerly asked what we *had* found. They would not believe when we told them, but sat there an hour, watching every movement, ready, on the appearance of the lumps, to take possession of the next claim. Miners practice many arts to deceive others with regard to what they may be doing. Especially is this the case if they are doing well, when they generally say they are doing nothing, reasoning as did Sir Walter Scott after he had published "Waverley," and wishing to conceal his authorship. People had no right to ask if he was the author, and therefore it was right for him to deceive them. I found it was better to tell the truth. The very purpose of concealment was thus better accomplished, for, speak as you might, you were sure not to be believed, and you were thus spared the sin of a falsehood. The only indication by which I came to judge that miners were doing well in any place was to find them early and late, and constantly, at their work. Our prospecting gave us 25 cents each.

Feb. 4th. This is a day to be remembered. *Letters from home!* If any one would learn the full significance of these words, let him pass ten months in California without one word from his loved ones, an unhappy exile from his own family. They may be sick, suffering, dying, and he who should be near them, to care for, and protect, and comfort them, is far away, and knows not their condition. It is an era in the mines—the arrival of the mail-agent. How cheerfully are our two dollars a letter paid. It was like receiving back my family from the *dead*—those letters, after so *long* and *weary a silence.* I am *happy*, and I am *miserable!* I am *calm*, and I am *fearfully excited!* It is an era in the miner's life when such, although tardy, messengers reach him. I have been present when many of these have given up to their owners their treasures of love or their burden of wretchedness. One has just opened his letter, and bursts into immoderate weeping. I inquire the cause. "My wife and child are both dead!" A physician of one of the hospitals told me that they dared not give their letters from home to those who were very sick; that in several instances they had seen persons in this condition, upon reading their letters, turn over and die.

A party of individuals, from the ranches on the plains below, passed us on their way to the head-waters of the Tuolumne, in pursuit of Indians who had stolen some of their mules. They were joined by numbers of the miners.

Feb. 5th. There is some excitement with regard to a bar one mile above us. Captain W. and myself have spent the day there, and have made $5 37 each. The lump of gold found at Sonora, and which, it was said, weighs seventy pounds, weighs only twenty-two pounds. The miner through whom I received my information had a claim next to the one in which this lump was found. It lay within two inches of the very spot where he was at work. One blow of his pick would have given him possession of it.

Feb. 6th. We have to-day made 75 cents each.

An interesting instance of success happened recently in a gulch upon the Stanislaus in our vicinity. Two young men, on their way to the mines, heard of this gulch, and concluded to commence their mining at that place; but, when they arrived there, they found the whole ground, considered favorable, occupied. Not knowing what to do or where to go, they made their first essay in a small ravine, across which a log was thrown for the convenience of the crowd constantly passing. In this ravine, and by the side of that log, they dug their hole. They came to a crevice in the rock, and saw opened before them a sight which makes the miner's heart glad—pounds of pure virgin gold, lying in lumps and scales, but awaiting their slightest effort to transfer it to their own pockets.

Feb. 7th. This forenoon my share was 25 cents. In the afternoon visited Yorktown. The diggings here are at a distance from any stream, upon the plain; but it is probable the stream once ran over the ground where the gold is now found. Before the gold can be taken out, excavations must be made, from twelve to twenty feet in depth. One cup showed about eight ounces of beautiful gold taken out in five hours; but it must be remembered that three men had been hard at work "clearing off" for seven days, during which time no gold had been made. This work is so severe and exposing that many at Yorktown are sick with rheumatism.

Feb. 8th. We divide to-day 12 cents to each man. The party previously mentioned, who went out in pursuit of the Indians, returned late last night, having with them the scalp of one Indian, which they had taken after decoying him into ambush. They had mutilated the body, and then dragged it about with ropes, made fast to the pummel of the saddle. They rode through the settlement, almost too drunk to keep their seats, firing their guns and pistols, while from their mouths issued volleys of shrieks and imprecations. It must be mentioned, in justice to several who started with this party, that, becoming disgusted with the proceedings of their companions, they left them, and consequently must not share in the disgrace of these transactions.

Feb. 9th. We visited a wild mountain ravine, and made $4 10 each to-day.

Feb. 11th, Monday. In the same place, we have made to each $5 62.

Feb. 12th. Have made 15 cents.

Feb. 13th. I must place a cipher against all our labors to-day. How expressive the miner's phrase, "Worked out!" Others may go after him and make pounds of gold; but, do what he can, labor as he may, become discouraged and leave, then return again and again, for him it is "*worked out*," and with "longing, lingering looks," he at length abandons it as a hopeless task.

Feb. 14th, Mormon Gulch. The rainy season seems to have passed. To-day, in company with several companions, who purpose trying the ravine and dry diggings with me, came to this place. This is a settlement about four miles from Curtis's. We found considerable excitement existing at Woods's as we came through. A miner, who was well known and esteemed, was found near that settlement murdered. He started yesterday, with considerable gold, intending to establish himself in some business in Stockton. His life was taken for his money.

A quartz mountain near Woods's, rising abruptly from the valley, and showing its glittering white crest at its summit, drew our attention. Some experiments have been made here to obtain gold from the rock, but thus far without success.

All the winter encampments are breaking up. The miners are on the move. The log and stone houses, and sometimes the tents, are deserted. Within a short distance, we saw over three hundred pack-mules, moving about in every direction.

Feb. 18th. Have spent the time since my last date in collecting the statistics of winter mining from numerous miners in the various encampments near me, and in writing to those at a greater distance. Have brought over our effects to Mormon Gulch, and selected a spot upon which to pitch our tent, at the foot of a mountain torrent, which descends here almost at once—sometimes playfully, sometimes angrily—into the valley. The mountains on both sides are high and precipitous. Directly at the foot of the cascade, it widens out into a kind of bar. Upon this we have selected a spot for our home. It is altogether one of the most romantic spots I have ever seen. From this place we have a view of a picturesque valley below and a wild cascade above us. When the stream is swollen after a heavy rain, the cascade loses its beauty, but becomes madly wild. Before we had erected our tent, the clouds, which had been lowering over us, began to pour down their contents upon us. We were all unprepared. Our provisions, clothing, and blankets were all wet. We find—too late, alas!—that we have committed the same kind of error with Cowper's birds, who anticipated pairing time, and built their nests too early. We had thought the winter over and gone, and the rainy season past, and, leaving our winter homes, had only a small and leaky tent for our shelter. There are four of us in company. Two of these are young friends, like brothers, who left home, and have since remained together, industrious, sober, and worthy young men, formerly in the employ of one of the Lawrence manufacturing companies. The third is a sailor—noble-hearted, sincere, frank, and full of fun and glee, yet a most persevering and hard-working miner.

Feb. 20th. Our first day's labor has given to each of us 45 cents. We have worked in a loose, talcose slate, on the edges of the stream. The gold is here coarser than in the rivers.

Feb. 21st. Have to-day made $1 each. Finding a place which seemed favorable, lying upon the bed of the stream, we began to dig down and throw off the top soil. We were soon interrupted by some persons, who said we could not work there, as they claimed it. We inquired why they had not left their pick or spade there, according to the custom. They replied that all the miners there were bound to stand by each other in maintaining their claims, which were known to each other. We find that most of the ground is held in this way, without being marked off or designated. The present alcalde, it is said, holds thirty of these claims.

Feb. 22d. Two of the company went over to the Stanislaus to prospect. In the place of gold, they brought back with them a bouquet of wild flowers, which would have graced the centre-table of any parlor. Our day's labor gave $1 12 to each. We have been ejected from two claims to-day, after working some time upon them. It seems that comparatively a few persons have undertaken to monopolize most of the gold soil in the gulch. They have driven off a large number of French miners from what is called "French Bar," and have likewise taken possession of that.

Feb. 23d. We have to-day divided our forces Two of us commenced sinking a hole upon French Bar, while the others went to a small stream running through an extent of table-land on the top of the mountain. Those on the bar below, of course, labored without present remuneration, as a deep excavation must be made, requiring our united efforts for a week or ten days. Those on the hill have made enough to divide $5 10 to each of us.

Feb. 25th. Those from the mountain have brought home $5 60 to each. We have been delayed in our work in the valley by the caving in of the dirt upon us, owing to the rain. At last we were compelled to abandon it for the present.

During the last night we had a violent snow-storm, which broke down our tent over our heads.

Feb. 26th. We commenced working upon another claim, but were again driven from it. Appealed to the alcalde, who decided against us, but at the same time pointed to another place, farther from the stream, where he advised us to work. We had spent two hours in digging here, when two miners laid claim to the ground, and soon brought the alcalde, who said it was a misunderstanding, and that he had intended to give us another place, upon which he then stood. There was then no doubt, and we worked all the afternoon upon that place. From the mountain we received $1 87 each. To our joy, we have found a plant which makes an excellent salad. It grows abundantly about us. We have lived so long without vegetables that this is a luxury.

Feb. 27th. It has been a cold day, with occasional dashes of snow. On reaching our claim in the valley, we found a miner in possession. On appealing to the alcalde, who had so decidedly given us the place only yesterday, to our surprise he again decided against us. Those upon the mountain made $6 62 to each of us. We all abandoned the valley, only retaining our claim upon the French Bar, where we left our crow-bar as our legal representative.

Feb. 28th. We had barely reached our place of labor this morning, upon the mountain, when it came on to rain so violently as to drive us home. We have spent the day in our tent, reading, writing, cooking, and sleeping.

March 4th, Monday evening. We have been kept from work for several days by the rain. Improved the time in prospecting upon the Stanislaus. Heard of a ravine near the Green Springs where much gold has been found. In the fall, when I was at Mr. Islip's, I met an eccentric man named Texas Jack. He told me that, early in the spring previous, while passing to the Stanislaus mines by a nearer path across the mountains, he had prospected in a ravine, and from one pan full of dirt had taken nearly a pound of gold. I took the direction to the place, but, having learned not to be led by such wonderful stories, I never visited the spot. Some miners, a few weeks since, happened upon this very place, and, before their secret was discovered, had made $8000. Several others had done well there.

March 5th. We have all worked together upon the mountain to-day. During the forenoon the vein ran out, and was nowhere to be found again. We made many trials, but without success. Made $2 06 each.

March 6th. We worked in a ravine where a few rich deposits have been found. One of our number, while working with his knife, in a few moments took out three lumps, which together were worth $21 75; but, during the whole of the day, the others of the company did not make 25 cents. The fields and the mountain sides begin to be clothed with the most beautiful and variegated flowers. I had heard and read much of the flowers of California, but they far surpass my highest anticipations. They spring up at the close of the rainy season, thrive amid frost and snow, live a short life of exceeding beauty, and soon die, cut down by the heat of the dry season.

March 7th. We were driven in by the rain this afternoon, after having made $1 25 each.

March 16th, Saturday. Since my last date, more than a week since, we have dug to the bottom of our claim, though it caved in several times upon us. We were so deep in the ground that we could not throw out the dirt, and were compelled to throw it up upon a platform, and then from the hole. After digging down eighteen feet, we were troubled with water, which came in upon us so fast as to require one to be kept bailing much of the time. At last we reached the bottom, washed the gold-dirt carefully, and, as the result of a week's labor for four of us, we shared the sum of $1 87. We have had severe and continued rains. Every thing is completely drenched. Our clothes, our blankets, our provisions, are all wet and moldy. Our fire is extinguished. The water stands in puddles under the pine boughs beneath our blankets. We were compelled to cut small drains from the middle of the tent to the large drain which surrounds it, and throw away the wet boughs, which

Jack calls our feathers. Then we kindled a large fire in the tent to dry it. The playful stream, which lately ran by us so harmless, now roars and rages, and is yet rising. The miners are pitching their tents farther up the hill.

March 17th, Sunday. It was a beautiful morning. The sun shone out clear and bright. We hung out our clothes and blankets to dry. The birds sang their sweetest notes. All things seemed to be filled with grateful love to the Creator and Preserver of all. Surely our hearts should not be less disposed to devout praise and adoration. It was pleasant to follow in the services of worship, as we thought it was being conducted at home, and to make a sanctuary of our own hearts. By allowing a difference of about three hours between the time at home and here, we could enjoy this pleasure, and, at the same time with friends so far from us, be engaged in the duties of worship. These were the meetings of the heart—the reunions of faith; and they strengthened us, and led us to trust more sincerely in the good promises of our Father.

March 18th. Formed, to-day, a company for trading purposes. Three of us gave each $100. With this $300, one of our number has gone down to Stockton to purchase goods. The rest of us went over, this morning, to the Stanislaus, to prospect. During the ramble, I had collected twenty-nine varieties of flowers, some of them most beautiful.

April 1st. During the remainder of the month, and in the absence of our companion at Stockton, we made but $4 28 each. The weather became moderate, and the dry season seemed to be setting in. The wind kept steady from the dry quarter. The peculiarities of a Frenchman working near us have amused us. Rain or shine, he is always seen without his hat. He carries his rifle over his shoulder, and several pistols and his knife in his belt. When he reaches his claim, he puts down a pistol on each side of him, and his hole resembles a fort, of which he is the undisputed owner. He came from New York with his son. He was doing a business there worth $2000 a year to him, and gave $5000 for their outfit. In the ten months since he left home, he has made nothing.

There is a company here from York county, Pennsylvania, numbering fourteen strong, hard-working men. They have made but $50 the last four weeks, or an average of 14 cents a day to each one. During this time we have been exposed, every or every other day, to severe rains or snows, the ice being sometimes half an inch thick. Crowds of miners still flock in here, attracted by the fabulous reports of the richness of these mines. Some have done well —a few very well—while the miners generally have not made enough to support them.

Our trading operation did not amount to any thing. The expenses of traveling, transportation of goods, time, &c., ate up the profits. I have to-day received a letter from some friends and traveling companions from Philadelphia, inviting me to visit them with reference to some mining operations for the summer. They are living at Jacksonville, on the Tuolumne River, some miles distant from us.

April 2d. To-day have walked over to Jacksonville, where I was greeted with a cordial welcome. This is quite a settlement. There are some comfortable houses here. As in every other settlement, the houses are of every possible variety, according to the taste or means of the miner. Most of these, even in winter, are tents. Some throw up logs a few feet high, filling up with clay between the logs. The tent is then stretched above, forming a roof. When a large company are to be accommodated with room, or a trading depôt is to be erected, a large frame is made, and canvas is spread over this. Those who have more regard to their own comfort or health, erect log or stone houses, covering them with thatch or shingles. I have seen some very good houses at Aqua Frio made and roofed with slate. Some comfortable wigwams are made of pine boughs thrown up in a conical form, and are quite dry. Many only spread a piece of canvas, or a blanket, over some stakes above them, while not a few make holes in the ground, where they burrow like foxes. The covers of these sometimes extend above ground, and are roofed with a plaster of clay, looking like so many tombs. The Mexicans and Chilinos put up rude frames, which they cover with hides. In two cases I have seen a kind of basket, looking like a large nest, made fast among the branches, high up in the trees. These may have been used by the Californians to guard against wild beasts. The huts of the Indians are of various kinds, always rude in their construction. They are similar to the wigwams of the wild Indians found in the Western States. There is one house, however, which deserves a passing notice. It is named *Tamascal.* It is made under ground, in the vicinity of the Indian settlement. In this the sick and infirm are sweated. This is a barbarous custom, and often ends the life of the poor patient.

We have spent much of the night in conversing on our plans, and I have determined to remove to this place. My friend, Mr. A., invites me to share with him his tent. He offers also to accompany me to Mormon Gulch to-morrow for my provisions, &c.

April 4th. Yesterday we walked over to the Gulch, where I made my few arrangements, received from my companions there the exact amount which I had deposited with them for trading purposes, and, having taken leave this morning, we returned, bringing sixty pounds between us, to Jacksonville.

CHAPTER V.

SOUTHERN MINES CONTINUED.

RULES OF AN ENCAMPMENT—HART'S BAR COMPANY—ARTICLES OF AGREEMENT—CANAL—AQUEDUCT—RESULTS OF MINING.

April 5th. Having arranged all our matters, also inclosed and dug up a spot for a garden, and planted potatoes, turnip, cabbage, and other seed, we started this afternoon, under the direction of Colonel M., upon a scientific prospecting tour. This gentleman has spent his life in the gold mines of Georgia, and possesses great experience and skill in the business of mining. We spent some hours upon the Kanacca Creek, making one excavation after another, down to the rocks, the colonel panning and testing each. We had no success. The colonel could show a few specks of fine gold in every pan, but, like all old miners, threw it out as not worth preserving. Finding our efforts fruitless, we climbed the sides of a high mountain, hanging over Jacksonville, to obtain a view of the country. There was not much in the view to please, but we soon found ourselves enjoying a most exciting sport. It was that of rolling down large stones from the summit over the precipitous sides of the mountain, and watching them as they rushed, leaped, bounded, crashing and tearing far away into the valley.

It is yet too early to do much in the river diggings, except in the making of canals, and other preparations for working the channel when the rivers are low. A large company have been thus engaged at this place for six months. Their canal is a stupendous work for this country, and is intended to drain more than a mile of the river. They expect to make at least $10,000 for each member. Their shares are sold at $1200. They are governed by strict regulations, and their officers consist of a president—a most worthy, efficient man—a vice-president, a secretary, a treasurer, and a board of directors. They have some of America's best and most esteemed citizens. One of their number is B., of New England, an original, and always full of fun. His wit and his anecdotes do much to keep up the spirits of his companions. With his good humor, he possesses also a good heart. One very warm day I passed the canal where they had been at work, but were resting a short time under the shade of a tree. As they were rising to resume their spades and picks, B. said, "Keep your seats, gentlemen!" Then he continued, evidently under the impression that his own quiet lounge was at an end unless he could contrive to interest his listeners by spinning one of his yarns, "That reminds me," said he, "of an old lady in our town, who was very self-conceited, and withal somewhat deaf. One Sunday she came to church very late. As she entered, the congregation, which was a crowded one, were rising for prayer. Thinking that the stir was on her account, and that all were rising to offer her a seat, she spoke out, loud enough to be heard half way up the aisle, 'Keep your seats, gentlemen! keep your seats! don't rise for me!' So, gentlemen," he continued, pulling one of his companions, who had risen, back again into his seat, "keep your seats!" A stranger, standing upon the bank of their canal, and looking down upon such a gang of Irish-appearing, hard-working miners, habited in their red flannel shirts, rough as the grisly bear, long beards, long hair, old hats, no shoes, or shoes variously patched, would hardly believe that there were those among them accustomed to the etiquette of Broadway and Chestnut Street, carrying beneath that rough exterior all which made them valued friends and citizens, faithful husbands and fathers. There was among them the nephew of Sir Robert Peele, who was accustomed to the gayety and fashion of a life at court. The miners are like the gold they seek, surrounded with dirt, rough looking, yet often possessing that sterling worth which will give them currency among the good, the gifted, and the beautiful.

As the bars upon our rivers are being occupied by such communities, it may not be uninteresting to know by what rules and regulations such communities are governed. Those here presented were drawn up by experienced lawyers, and men of wise heads and good hearts, and may serve as illustrating the mode of government common among the miners.

The following laws and regulations for the internal government of the encampment of Jacksonville were passed at a meeting held in the town for that purpose, in front of Colonel Jackson's store, on the 20th of January, 1850:

ARTICLE I.

The officers of this district shall consist of an alcalde and sheriff, to be elected in the usual manner by the people, and continue in office at the pleasure of the electors.

ARTICLE II.

In case of the absence or disability of the sheriff, the alcalde shall have power to appoint a deputy.

ARTICLE III.

Civil cases may be tried by the alcalde, if the parties desire it; otherwise they shall be tried by a jury.

ARTICLE IV.

All criminal cases shall be tried by a jury of eight American citizens, unless the accused should desire a jury of twelve persons, who shall be regularly summoned by the sheriff, and sworn by the alcalde, and shall try the case according to the evidence.

ARTICLE V.

In the administration of law, both civil and criminal, the rule of practice shall conform, as near as possible, to that of the United States, but the forms and customs of no particular state shall be required or adopted.

ARTICLE VI.

Each individual locating a lot for the purpose of mining, shall be entitled to twelve feet of ground in width, running back to the hill or mountain, and forward to the centre of the river or creek, or across a gulch or ravine (except in cases hereinafter provided for); lots commencing in all cases at low-water mark, and running at right angles with the stream where they are located.

ARTICLE VII.

In cases where lots are located according to Article VI., and the parties holding them are prevented by the water from working the same, they may be represented by a pick, shovel, or bar, until in a condition to be worked; but should the tool or tools aforesaid be stolen or removed, it shall not dispossess those who located it, provided he or they can prove that they were left as required; and said location shall not remain unworked longer than one week, if in condition to be worked, otherwise it shall be considered as abandoned by those who located it (except in cases of sickness).

ARTICLE VIII.

No man or party of men shall be permitted to hold two locations, in a condition to be worked, at the same time.

ARTICLE IX.

No party shall be permitted to throw dirt, stones, or other obstructions upon located ground adjoining them.

ARTICLE X.

Should a company of men desire to turn the course of a river or stream for the purpose of mining, they may do so (provided it does not interfere with those working below them), and hold and work all the ground so drained; but lots located within said ground shall be permitted to be worked by their owners, so far as they could have been worked without the turning of the river or stream; and this shall not be construed to affect the rights and privileges heretofore guarantied, or prevent redress by suit at law.

ARTICLE XI.

No person coming direct from a foreign country shall be permitted to locate or work any lot within the jurisdiction of this encampment.

ARTICLE XII.

Any person who shall steal a mule, or other animal of draught or burden, or shall enter a tent or dwelling, and steal therefrom gold-dust, money, provisions, goods, or other articles, amounting in value to one hundred dollars or over, shall, on conviction thereof, be considered guilty of felony, and suffer death by hanging. Any aider or abettor therein shall be punished in like manner.

ARTICLE XIII.

Should any person willfully, maliciously, and premeditatedly take the life of another, on conviction of the murder, he shall suffer death by hanging.

ARTICLE XIV.

Any person convicted of stealing tools, clothing, or other articles, of less value than one hundred dollars, shall be punished and disgraced by having his head and eye-brows close shaved, and shall leave the encampment within twenty-four hours.

ARTICLE XV.

The fee of the alcalde for issuing a writ or search-warrant, taking an attestation, giving a certificate, or any other instrument of writing, shall be five dollars; for each witness he may swear, two dollars; and one ounce of gold-dust for each and every case tried before him.

The fee of the sheriff in each case shall be one ounce of gold-dust, and a like sum for each succeeding day employed in the same case.

The fee of the jury shall be to each juror half an ounce in each case.

A witness shall be entitled to four dollars in each case.

ARTICLE XVI.

Whenever a criminal convict is unable to pay the costs of the case, the alcalde, sheriff, jurors, and witnesses shall render their services free of remuneration.

ARTICLE XVII.

In case of the death of a resident of this encampment, the alcalde shall take charge of his effects, and dispose of them for the benefit of his relatives or friends, unless the deceased otherwise desire it.

ARTICLE XVIII.

All former acts and laws are hereby repealed, and made null and void, except where they conflict with claims guarantied under said laws.

ABNER PITTS, JR., Sec'y.

Jacksonville, Jan. 20, 1850.

April 15th. Many rumors reached us respecting certain rich diggings ten miles distant, among the mountains. They are named Savage's diggings, and lie upon or near the Rattlesnake Creek. Large numbers of miners have been for some time going in that direction, while multitudes, who have been but to be disappointed, are returning. One of our friends, the president of the Jacksonville company, left for this place, promising to send us back information as to his success. We were therefore much gratified, the next day, to receive intelligence of the most encouraging character, accompanied by a message for us to hasten up as soon as possible. We made our arrangements very hastily—stewed venison, baked several loaves of bread, and made some pies of the red berry called *manzanita*, which has some resemblance to the cherry. It grows upon a shrub ten feet high, the bark of which is smooth, and of bright orange color. On the 11th instant we started for Savage's diggings, in our way clambering up one of the steepest mountains I have ever seen. After a very fatiguing walk, we reached the ground by the middle of the afternoon, and were so anxious to try our luck among the crowd of adventurers, that we commenced prospecting at once. Our friend, who had come up before us, had been successful the first day; but all this was over before we reached him. Very little gold rewarded our labors. As night came on, threatening to be a cold one, we prepared to pass it as comfortably as we might. Piling up logs and brush, a bright blaze shed its cheering influence upon us. Wrapping our blankets about us, and stretching our feet to the fire, we slept soundly.

Our stay upon the mountain was brief. There was so little encouragement that it was considered best to retrace our steps. Lame, hungry, and tired, we arrived the next night at our encampment near Jacksonville.

During the following week we worked upon the banks of the river, with but small success. One day we made $2 50 each, and the other days we made nothing.

May 1st. Since my last date, we have not made enough to buy us our provisions. Much of the time, my companions being engaged upon the canal, I labored by myself. One day I made $6; and then, for a week, did not average 6 cents a day: so uncertain is the employment of mining. Cases are very frequent of persons making $100 in a day, and sometimes in a single hour, and the whole week following making nothing. I heard of a case which illustrates this point. A young man of rather indolent habits, and without the perseverance and application which, it would be supposed, are necessary to insure success in mining, happened into a valuable claim. Hiring a man to aid him, he took out, in six weeks, $4500. Near him was a company of six industrious and persevering miners. They labored on assiduously, week after week, for a period of four months, and at the end of that time they had all made about $1500. We are hoping for better success in the river diggings when the water is low. At present there is very little being accomplished. Laborers may be hired at $2 50 and $3 a day.

May 15th. During the three days immediately following my last date, I made, while working by myself, $17. Was invited to join a few miners working near me, who intend to organize a company for the purpose of mining at Hart's Bar—a place two miles below Jacksonville—when the river shall be low enough to be worked. All of these are Southern gentlemen. One of them, a nephew of Commodore Turner, U. S. N., lost a fortune by a sudden decline in the price of cotton, and, with the hope of retrieving his condition, came to California. He has messing with him two young friends, one from Annapolis, Maryland, the other from Mobile, Alabama. There is also in the company a person who has spent eight years in the gold mines of Georgia, and possessing great skill in tracing up a vein of gold. I was not long in deciding to connect myself with them, and the next day we labored together.

One day last week, as I was walking down from Jacksonville, where I had been to purchase provisions, I saw a number of men dragging some heavy object to the edge of a hill hanging over me. Presently they pushed it over the brow, and it came tumbling, like a bag of wool, over and over, down the side of the mountain. It was a grisly bear, which had just been killed, and which weighed six hundred pounds. As the river was too high to allow crossing that evening to my camp, I accepted an invitation from the miner who had killed the bear to be his guest for the night. We feasted upon the flesh, which was tender and sweet. During the following week we had no success in gold-digging, the river being too high. It was also too early to commence working upon our canal; but on May 10th we organized into a company, put up stakes with flags, designating our claim, and made advertisement of the same in Jacksonville, leaving a certified copy with the alcalde. Then we adjourned, to meet for work on the 4th of July, in the mean time having a common purse, and sharing mutually in the profits of the whole till that time. A part of the company went up to the Rattlesnake Creek, prospecting. At this time an association—named the Adelphi Mining Association—was formed, chiefly of miners from Jacksonville, numbering twenty-nine persons. Their object was to drain a portion of the channel of Woods's Creek, in which was a deep hole, nearly the width of the creek, and twenty yards in length. The place is two miles above the junction of the creek with the Tuolumne. Much gold had been found all along the banks, encouraging the belief that, could we drain the stream and work the bed of it, it would "pay well." The company was a very mixed one. There were the good and the bad, the serious and the gay.

As there was nothing else at this time to occupy my attention, and as it was expected to work out the claim before it would be possible to work in the river, I accepted an invitation to join this company. With seventy pounds' burden upon my back, I walked up from Hart's Bar, and accepted an invitation from a miner to use his tent during his absence. Last night I slept upon the ground, spreading my blankets upon a mat at the bottom of the tent. Here I slept alone, and at a distance from any other encampment. This noon, coming up to cook my dinner, a large snake crept from under the mat in the tent, and quickly disappeared in a hole near by. With a spade I dug him out, and, after killing him, found that he measured three feet ten inches. I don't know his name, but he has a flat head, looks very brassy, and has a sharp horn at the tail. It answers the description of the horned snake. It is said that, taking the end of its tail in its mouth, it will form a perfect hoop with its body, rolling rapidly over till it reaches the object at which it aims, upon which it inflicts a severe, and sometimes fatal blow, with the horn in the tail. As I am disposed to shun the society of such suspicious creatures, I have just swung my hammock outside the tent, between two trees.

June 1st. The Adelphi Company commenced their labors on the 16th ult. We were early at work, and toiled cheerfully on, sustained by the hope that we were about to meet with success. I hardly dared to give myself up to the bright, golden anticipations of my companions; and still they seemed well founded and reasonable. The gold had been traced, in numerous rich layers and veins, down to the very edges of the deep hole in the channel. Doubtless, then, as it would naturally sink down, and settle at the lowest point, washed in by every freshet, if that point could be reached, we should find a rich deposit. A canal must be made so deep as to drain the bottom of this hole, and then a dam must turn the water around the hole, through a new channel. The canal was cut through solid slate. The work was very heavy, requiring the largest bars and picks. We worked all the time in the water. After nine days' labor, we at length completed the canal, which is about one hundred feet in length, four in width, and five in depth. The only fear was lest it should not effectually drain the hole, without which all our labor was lost. We made the dam on the tenth day, and anxiously awaited the result. Fears were expressed, but we left at night, to meet in the morning, by which time the water would have been reduced to its level. In the morning we were there, and found, after all we could do, that there were three feet of water in the hole we wished to drain. Nothing but steam forcing-pumps would have enabled us to prosecute the work, and we silently and sadly abandoned it. I went up to my tent, and was there alone. All my efforts had failed. I was already deeply in debt for my provisions. Had I any prospect of success? Could I hope even to make enough to enable me to return to my family? The future seemed dark to me. I was desolate and disheartened. In the midst of my sadness and gloom, there came a whisper! A voice dear to me had spoken it before in my sorrow; memory now brought back the same voice, whispering to me,

"Fear not, but trust in Providence!"

That voice had never failed to cheer and comfort me, and it failed not now. That kind Providence had ever blessed me, and I could trust on, and hope ever!

The gold-digger may not stand still. No stone must be left unturned—the treasure may lie beneath the next. This is the miner's work: he must spend his efforts and his years in rolling over stones, even though his heart is sick with hope deferred—it may be under the next.

I had cooked my dinner with my breakfast—some venison and bread, with a dish of beans and a dipper of coffee. Going to take my dinner, I found the whole gone—eaten clean and the coffee drank, probably by some miner more hungry than myself. I acknowledged myself indebted to some one, as, by taking my thoughts from myself, and giving me employment, he did me a kindness.

The next day I came up into the mountains to join my companions at Rattlesnake Creek. It was late at night when I reached their camp, which was a wild spot beneath some trees. A camp-fire, dimly burning, lighted me to the place. The pure mountain air and my long mountain ramble gave me a good appetite, for which the kindness of my friends provided most amply. Our prospect of success here is good. Some miners have done very well. We have been engaged for a few days in turning the water of the creek, that we may work in the channel.

We lead here a strangely wild life. As we had no mules to bring our provisions, implements for cooking and labor, &c., we were obliged to bring them ourselves. We therefore left behind us every thing which could by any possibility be dispensed with. An iron pan, which we use for washing gold, serves also for boiling our coffee. A frying-pan is our only cooking utensil. In this one of the company—who leaves work before the others for the purpose—fries some pork, which is rancid, and then, in the fat, fries some flour batter. After it is done on one side, he tosses it whirling up, catching it as it comes down upon the other side, which is then fried in turn. We have neither knife, fork, spoon, nor plate. A spade answers very well for a plate. We use coffee without sugar, bread without salt, salad without vinegar.

Our prospects so far are not favorable. Four of us were at work, when a pretty vein of gold was discovered, passing down the channel and into the bank. We have to-day made $18 25 each.

June 2d. The vein has run up into the bank, and all our efforts to find it are in vain. This wild mountain creek is fast filling up with miners. Some considerable sums have been taken out. Along the whole length of the creek are closely scattered groups of Mexicans, Chilinos, Indians, Europeans, Americans. At the head of the creek, upon an extensive plain, several large lumps of gold have been found, and a company has been organized to drain and work the lower part of the plain.

June 5th. We are still at work at the old place—still hoping somewhere to find the lost vein. We have sunk several holes at some distance from the channel, in the bank, thinking thus to intercept the treasure we have lost. While thus engaged, a messenger arrived from the head of the creek—a settlement named "Big Oak," located upon the plain I have mentioned—calling for all the men and guns, as the Indians had attacked them. Not having any inclination to join in the fight, I remained at the camp. One American and a few Indians were killed, and several Indians severely wounded. The quarrel arose between the chief of the Indians and an American, who were both drunk. After the flight of the Indians, their encampment was robbed, and it was with difficulty that a few humane persons present interfered to prevent the cruel treatment of some aged and sick females left behind.

June 8th. For several days the Indians have kept us in a state of alarm. All the white men upon the creek were summoned to meet at a log house, which they fortified, to guard against a night attack. It was said that fifty Indian warriors from the Mercedes were on the way to attack us. During the next day the excitement was increased by the rumor that the attack was to take place during that night. Nearly all left for the lower settlements, or assembled at the log house. We remained quietly at our camp, only taking the precaution to extinguish our campfires.

June 9th. The Indians have to-day manifested their desire of peace by returning to the settlement, digging up and burning, according to their custom, the bodies of their chief and the other Indians who had been killed. All is quiet, and the miners are returning in crowds. Mr. S., the Georgia miner, having heard that six Mexicans had made seventy-five pounds of gold in ten days, in a ravine near us, went over to-day to see the place. He found every foot of it occupied. There is much sickness at the mines. Many whose cases would yield to a little kind nursing, if they were promptly attended, become desperately ill, and often die from neglect of the early symptoms. We often hear of instances of success in mining, some of them most remarkable.

At Sullivan's Camp, a few miles from us, a Dutchman followed a vein of gold down to a large rock, which continually became richer as he progressed. Aided by some friends, he succeeded in removing the rock, and in two hours' time took out forty pounds of the precious ore.

June 21st. Since my last date we have not made enough to defray our expenses, but to day have added to the treasury . . . . $32.

June 22d.	Company made	50.
" 23d.	Sunday.	
" 24th.	Company made	25.
" 25th.	" "	83.
" 26th.	" "	98.
" 27th.	" "	68.
" 28th.	" "	84.
" 29th.	" "	7.
In eight days	. . . .	$447.

Dividend to each of five members, $89 40; average per day to each one, $11 17.

The Sabbath is generally observed as a day of physical rest by the miners. There are few who engage in mining upon this day. But all find it indispensable to give attention to some necessary personal business. In every encampment are found those who improve the day in reading the Bible and other books, and in singing the songs of home in a strange land. Still, it must be confessed, there is more gambling and drinking upon that day than upon all the other days of the week. When there is preaching at the mines, which is rarely the case, it is well attended, and listened to with respect.

July 29th. We continued at Rattlesnake Creek till the 3d of July, but without much success. On that day we came down from the high mountains, to attend the meeting of the Hart's Bar Company on the 4th. On our way down, an old Californian showed us the valuable medicinal plants "Buena herba" and "Canchalagua." We found much alarm prevailing at Jacksonville on account of the many murders recently committed in the vicinity. A nightly patrol has been kept up. The river was very high. Several have been drowned in attempting to cross. On the morning of the 4th we endeavored to cross at the ferry. There were nine persons in a boat of the ordinary size. Before putting out into the current, which runs very rapidly by, we passed by a cluster of young trees and bushes in the water. One of the passengers unguardedly caught at one of the bushes, which caused the boat immediately to sway about and dip water. It was instantly half full, and five of the passengers had jumped out, and were clinging to the bushes. The others of us made our way as soon as possible to the shore, and then contrived to rescue our companions from their dangerous situation.

On that day dined with my kind friend A. from Philadelphia, on the bank of the river, near Hawkinsville—a sort of pic-nic, with "porter for two." While in the village, I was introduced to a miner from Virginia, whose brief history while at the mines is interesting. On his arrival at San Francisco, about a year previous, he purchased a good supply of provisions, which he packed upon mules, and with a muleteer he started for Deer Creek. Not meeting with any person to direct him, he crossed the creek, not knowing that it was such. Going on for some distance, he came suddenly, and to his great alarm, to a settlement of Indians, who, however, through his Mexican muleteer, expressed friendship and a desire to trade. He was induced to pitch his tent, and remain with them. The business proved so profitable, that he returned to Stockton for a larger supply. In a short time he had many Indians working for him, and in a few weeks was able to send home $17,000, retaining $3000 for his future operations. Since that time he has had no success; had sunk the fund he had retained, and was now working as a hired laborer for the means to take him to his family.

On our way back we met the mail agent, who had letters for me. He declines taking gold-dust to San Francisco, on account of the danger. Remarked that he traveled feeling that he might be shot at any moment, and that the assassin might be concealed behind the next bush. Twelve murders have been committed within a week in and near Sonora. There is so much alarm that a volunteer company has been organized, till a regiment of dragoons can be ordered here. This state of things is no doubt owing, in part, to the heavy tax imposed upon foreigners, which deprives many of them of employment. In consequence, they become desperate, often being destitute of the means with which to purchase their daily supplies. They are accordingly driven to steal and to murder.

The river being yet too high to allow us to commence our work upon Hart's Bar, we postponed our meeting for a week, and returned to the mountains, hoping to find another vein of gold; but our efforts were not rewarded.

On the 9th instant we came down to Hart's Bar to attend a company meeting; but the river being still too high for profitable labor, we returned again to the mountains, where, and at Woods's Creek, we have worked till this time, not averaging 50 cents a day.

To-day we have come down to Hart's Bar, to make all necessary arrangements—lay in our provisions, purchase mining tools, pitch our tents, erect brush arbors—before we begin the work. I have selected a spot for my arbor-home, a little above the bar, on a gentle rise, and at a short distance from the encampment of my companions, which consists of a picturesque group of tents and arbors on the bar below. Just behind me the mountain ascends abrupt and steep. I am making my arbor beneath a large pine, the only tree upon the bar. It is called the "medicine-tree," because its pitch is used as a balsam for all burns and bruises. This tree forms one of the supporters of my arbor. Driving into the ground three posts, and putting poles across these, supported also by branches of the pine, I have covered the frame thus formed with brush and boughs, throwing them on the top, and interweaving them into the sides. This forms for me a cool, shaded room, about ten feet square, where I may find a shelter from the intense heat of the sun, which is to-day 113° in the shade. Between a pin driven into the tree and a post at the back of the arbor I have swung my hammock, in which, dressing myself and creeping into the bag, as I have already described, I shall spread my blankets over me. I can fancy this will be a sort of magnetic telegraph office, whence, as soon as I am asleep, I shall be transported home with lightning speed, and spend many a sweet hour with my distant family. On a post in the middle of the arbor, which supports also the poles and boughs overhead, I have left the short prongs, upon which I hang my clothes, bags, &c., excepting the small bag containing my letters and Daguerreotypes, which hangs upon the post at the head of my hammock. My provisions are stored in the back part of my arbor, while my kitchen is all out doors.

July 30th. We have to-day commenced our labors. So much has been said of the mining operations upon the rivers, especially upon the Tuolumne, which is believed to be very rich, that I am led, for the information of my readers, to go more into detail in describing this, the closing portion of my mining life. The gold is often found, in rich deposits, in the channels of these rivers. To be obtained, the river must first be turned by dam and canal. As this is an operation requiring the united labor of many individuals, it is customary to form companies, which elect their officers, form their laws, and mutually share the expense and labor of the preparatory work, and also divide equally the profits.

The Hart's Bar Draining and Mining Company was organized in May. The following Articles of Agreement were adopted in July, at a meeting of the company, when twenty-one entered their names as members, and elected their officers. It should be remarked that mining associations enjoy all the privileges and immunities of corporate bodies; their just claims and rights are sacredly regarded; and any violence done to these rights would be visited by the vengeance of all the miners for miles around. No code of laws or staff of police could more fully establish a miner in the possession of his ten feet square. No well-drawn writing, from the royal charter down to the simple deed of conveyance, could be a surer guarantee. He would not be obliged to wait a tedious process at law, or pay his last dollar for a bill of ejectment. The work of restitution and retribution at the mines is speedy, summary, and effective.

ARTICLES OF AGREEMENT OF THE HART'S BAR DRAINING AND MINING COMPANY.

PREAMBLE.

We, the undersigned, having associated ourselves together for the purpose of draining and mining that part of the Tuolumne River known as Hart's Bar, and to work out the portion of the bed of the river so drained, do adopt the following articles of agreement, to govern us in the prosecution of the said work:

ARTICLE I.

This company shall be known by the name of The Hart's Bar Draining and Mining Company.

ARTICLE II.

This company shall not number over twenty-five members.

ARTICLE III.

The officers of this company shall be a president, a secretary—who shall likewise perform the duties of treasurer—and four directors, which shall be elected from its own body, in such manner as they may see fit, a majority constituting an election; and the officers so elected shall continue in office during the pleasure of the company.

ARTICLE IV.

It shall be the duty of the president to call all meetings of the company, and to preside at them. He shall put to vote all motions duly made, and, in all cases of a tie in voting, he shall give the casting vote.

ARTICLE V.

The duties of the president shall devolve on the chief director in all cases of his absence or disability to serve.

ARTICLE VI.

It shall be the duty of the secretary and treasurer to keep minutes of the proceedings of the company, and to take charge of all books and papers belonging to the office. He shall keep an accurate account of the time, as given him by the directors, and shall report to the company each Saturday evening, immediately after adjourning the work of the day. It shall likewise be his duty to take charge of all moneys belonging to the company, and to pay such demands upon the same as may come to him approved by the company and signed by the president.

ARTICLE VII.

The board of directors shall discharge the duties of engineers. Each director shall keep an accurate account of the time employed by each man under his charge, and shall report the same to the secretary every Friday evening. They shall superintend and direct all operations of the company. They shall divide the company into parties, each party to be headed by a director, who shall oversee their working, and take charge of the daily proceeds of the same, which he shall deliver to the treasurer every night, and take his receipt therefor.

ARTICLE VIII.

Of the proceeds arising from the operations of the company for the current week, ending on Friday, the treasurer shall make a report to the company on the next day, in the following manner: The weekly distribution shall be equal among the members, except in cases of absence, when an amount shall be deducted from his share corresponding with the hourly earnings of the company for the week. In cases of sickness or unavoidable absence, substitutes may be employed, if approved by the directors.

ARTICLE IX.

All specimens of unusual beauty or value shall be sold at auction, and the proceeds put in the treasury.

ARTICLE X.

The working time of the company shall be from seven to twelve o'clock A. M., and from half past one to half past five o'clock P. M.; and each member shall be charged at the rate of $3 per hour for the time he shall lose, to be paid at or before the regular meeting next after the one on which it is reported.

ARTICLE XI.

All amendments and additions to these Articles of Agreement shall be decided upon by a two thirds vote.

ARTICLE XII.

All applications for membership in this company shall be determined by votes with black and white pebbles; and two black pebbles shall exclude from membership.

ARTICLE XIII.

Any member wishing to sell his share, the company shall have the first right of purchase; which if they decline, he may sell it, but only to such person as the company approves.

ARTICLE XIV.

No member of this company shall be allowed to hold two claims on the river, capable of being worked, at the same time.

The following officers were elected: T. P. Hotchkiss, president; D. B. Woods, secretary and treasurer; William Marlatt, chief director; R. E. Thompson, second director; F. Ridout, third director.

I have received into my arbor, as a camp-mate, my valued friend M. He is a young sailor—a man with a brave heart in danger, but with a kind heart to those he loves—rough or gentle, like the ocean he has navigated. He has to-day made a bed-frame, nailing some bags on the bottom for sacking; also, some camp-stools, while the company's carpenter has made me a table; so that our mining home presents an unusual air of comfort. We have sent to Stockton for a supply of provisions. M. is a first-rate cook, and many of the dishes he can furnish would be relished in any place where there are good appetites. The living at the mines is much better than it has been. We have more vegetables, better flour, and a greater variety of provisions generally. Provisions are also cheaper than they have been at any time previous.

The work before us is truly an arduous one, made doubly so by the limited means we have of prosecuting it. The clay for the construction of our canal must be carried in hand-barrows, borne between two persons, from the side of the hill down a steep bank, then along over a stony path to the canal, a distance varying from one eighth to one sixth of a mile; and this must be done day after day for weeks. Then the lumber for the aqueduct is to be sawed by hand, from logs cut and rolled from the tops and sides of the mountains, with whip-saws. This part of the business is under the direction of a master architect from London.

Sept. 24th, 1851. We prosecuted both parts of our work at the same time. A part were employed in carrying the clay to the canal. An account was kept one day, and it was ascertained that each barrow was carried, during the day, fourteen miles. Since my last date I have carried such a barrow four hundred and twenty miles. The clay was put in large heaps, where we could easily obtain it when it should be wanted in the making of the canal. This was a most arduous undertaking. Sometimes it must pass through a solid ledge of hard asbestos rock, and then through deep holes in the river, where it has washed into the banks. In such a case, a heavy wall, filled with clay, must be made. When completed, the canal was six hundred and thirty-eight feet in length, and sixteen in width. Making the aqueduct to convey the water from the canal, which passed through Paine's Bar, above us, was the most difficult task. The logs, which were cut upon the mountain, were rolled to the pits, and then sawed by hand. Piers were constructed by making crates of logs, which were firmly pinned together, then sunk in their places by being filled with large stones. Another large pier was made by rolling and carrying stones into the river a distance of thirty feet. The sleepers of the aqueduct were laid upon this and the laden crates. When it was finished, it was a handsome piece of workmanship, of which we were justly proud. It was one hundred and two feet in length, and twelve wide. This kind of labor—yielding no remuneration, only being preparatory to the more exciting, though laborious process of gold-digging—was prosecuted from July the 30th to this date, Sept. 24th. We were awakened at dawn by the second director, who came out before his tent, and sang, in a loud, clear voice, "Up in the morning early, boys!" That song, which often brought me out of my dreams, to this day I carry back into my dreams. After a short time allowed for taking breakfast, the roll was called, and we went to our daily labor. And oh! when night came again, how sweet, after a bath in the river, was "the rest of the laboring man!" On the 20th of September the pleasure was ours of seeing the whole channel of the river opposite our bar laid bare for our operations. It was *ours*, after contending with difficulties, privations, and hardships innumerable, and of no ordinary kind, and which have deprived of health many of our company. It was all *ours*, with the joyous anticipation of soon receiving the reward of our efforts, and returning home with at least a competence. About two weeks since—it was the 6th instant—we were alarmed by a considerable rise of the river. While at breakfast upon that day, the water of the river became suddenly muddy. Soon after we perceived this, intelligence was brought down to us from the Jacksonville company that they were expecting to see their dam washed away. The river continued gradually to rise for an hour, when there was a sudden freshet, caused by the giving way of some dam above us. We hastened, with the aid of other companies, to open the head of the canal, and to roll heavy stones into the aqueduct. The water came up to the floor, then a few inches above it. We looked on, expecting to see all our works, which we had spent weeks in completing, at once destroyed. But the water ceased to rise, then slowly subsided, showing behind it the wet ground and the line of foam, chips and dirt marking the limits of the encroachment. Soon we were able to return to our labor with lightened spirits, and some with other kinds. Many cradles, buckets, and other things floated past us in the river.

The shares of the company immediately advanced several hundred dollars. One share was sold for $1200, while $2500 was refused for another.

Two days since we commenced making a ditch under the wall of the canal, to carry off the water which leaked through its embankments. Two cradles were set, and the dirt from the bed of the ditch was washed through, and in three hours there was deposited in the treasury $176.

Yesterday we continued to work upon the ditch, adding two more cradles, and during the day made $415 75. At midnight, and in the rain, we were called out to repair the walls of the canal, and stop several leaks. The river was very high, and slowly rising. After several hours' night-labor, we succeeded in stopping every leak but one. In one place the water rushed through in a torrent.

This morning—Sept. 24th—the water was rising in its might. Notwithstanding our aqueduct and canal, the bed of the river was nearly full. We hastened to remove all our mining implements. Slowly, but surely, the freshet came, till the destruction of all our works seemed inevitable.

We thought not of hunger, though we had been laboring hard much of the night and all the morning. About ten o'clock there was a pause of fearful suspense. The rising seemed arrested—might it not be on the turn? For a short time there was hope; the pendulum vibrated each moment between our hopes and our fears. We hastened up the hill side—after all had been done which could be—to a spot commanding a view of the whole, to see our hopes or our fears realized. We perceived at once that the existence of all our works depended upon the Paine's Bar dam above us. Would that stand the torrent? Should that maintain its position, we were safe; let that go, *all* would be swept away! As we kept our eyes fixed upon this—it was a quarter of a mile above us—the black line of wall was suddenly broken, and the torrent poured through a small opening forced in the dam, and in a few seconds the river ran foaming over the entire length of the wall, which bowed and sank before the irresistible force. Then and there was heard a sound new and strangely startling to me. It was caused by large stones *rushing* and *grinding* under water, borne on by the tremendous power of the current. It might be imagined that the thousand submerged chariots and cars of Pharaoh's host were driving impetuously over that river channel. As soon as the dam above us gave way, the water rose with great rapidity—two, three, four, six, eight feet—till it poured over the top of the aqueduct. Still it nobly stood, held in its place by the immense weight of the water which poured through it from the canal above. It was indeed surprising to see a thing so light resisting that mad and mighty force. It was but a moment! Gently and gracefully it yielded, swayed forward, and moved away with the ease and rapidity of a thing of life. Thus, in one moment, we saw the work of *one thousand and twenty-nine days* done by the company swept away and rendered useless. Within five minutes of the time when the aqueduct disappeared around the bend of the river, a meeting of the company was called, and a resolution presented to proceed with our work by means of wing-dams.

Oct. 8th. From the time of the freshet to the 30th of Sept., the river was too high to permit us to commence our new operations. On that day—Monday—the directors led the way, shuddering, and actually shrieking, from the sudden chill, into the cold stream. A line was formed, extending out to the middle of the river, those at the end of the line working in four feet water, where the current was so strong that our feet would often be forced from under us, and we would be whirled away down the current, to scrabble on shore as we could. To appreciate the difficulties of our arduous and dangerous task, and to understand the kind of work which was to be done, let my reader imagine himself standing by me, and looking at what is going on below us, while I describe the scene to him. The whole force of the company, aided by some thirty Mexicans we have employed to work for us, is concentrated upon the wall which is to be the head of the dam. This is to run from the shore out to the middle of the river, or about forty feet. Two walls are thrown up parallel to each other, and about two feet apart. The difficulty of this is almost inconceivable. We must roll the stones and adjust them where there is a rapid current four feet in depth. Sometimes a whole section of this will be swept off at once, and must be done all over again. After the walls are completed, strong cloth is spread down against the lower wall, and over its whole surface. The space is then filled up with small twigs, sand, and clay. After the wall is carried thus to the middle of the river, it must turn, forming a right angle, and run down through the middle of the river, parallel to the shore, a distance of two hundred and fifty feet, till it passes over some falls, by which means the water is partially drained from a portion of the channel. This portion so drained is then divided off into pens, which are surrounded by small walls, so made as to exclude the water, which is then bailed out, and all the space within the walls of the pens is thus worked. The cradles are set just over the walls, on the outer side, and some six or eight of them are sometimes being rocked at the same time, supplied with dirt by the dozen or twenty miners in the pens. It is a busy scene. It will be seen that this work is not only laborious, but in an extreme degree exposing. At times nearly all the company may be seen working together, waist deep, in the water, which, coming from the Sierra Nevada, is very cold. This we must endure, while a burning sun is shining hotly down upon the head.

There are two servants, belonging to members of the company, at work with the rest, and right hard-working men they are. One of them, who is from Mississippi, is as athletic and vigorous a man as I have ever seen. If any work is to be done which requires great strength, he is called upon; and he always engages in it singing some merry song. The other servant is an old man, named Allen, belonging to our president, who tells me he shall give him free papers when he leaves the country.

Direct your attention once again to the interesting tableau in the river below us. Among the group of Mexicans and Americans—black, brown, and white—is one remarkable person. He is a tall, stout man, having the appearance of one accustomed to command, and some of the severity of one who has commanded those who never dared dispute his authority. He had been a boatman upon the Mississippi. He was our chief director; and, though he ruled with unquestioned sway, he was light-hearted, jovial, and free. He was known among us by the name of "Red," from the fact that, whenever there was any fighting to be done, or when he was "going upon a spree," he put on a red flannel shirt. By our "Articles of Agreement," in the absence of the president, the duty of presiding over the meetings devolved upon him, as chief director. At a meeting which was called at the regular time of work, the president being absent, the chair was to be taken—speaking figuratively, for such a thing as a chair was unknown at the mines—by this remarkable individual. The thought that he was so far to submit his own opinion to the decision of others as to permit them an opportunity of expressing dissent even by their votes, did not seem to enter into his calculations. The meeting had been called to decide whether or not we should work on that Saturday afternoon. Under the circumstances, most were in favor of adjourning work till Monday morning. What was the dismay of those who had anticipated no difficulty in carrying the question in the affirmative, and who came prepared to talk down or to talk *out* all opposition, if they had to talk till night, when Red entered with the air of one who is for deeds, and not words. He was strongly opposed to the proposed measure. "Boys," he said, as he came by, spade in hand, as if on his way to labor, impatient of any delay, and waving all ceremony—"Boys, I say, go to work. All who are in favor say 'Ay!'" One emphatic "*Ay!*" by himself, was the only response. "Those who are opposed," he continued, at the same time starting on his way, "say nothing, and go to work!" In five minutes every man was at his post, wondering how it had happened. I was desirous, for one, to have the afternoon to myself, as I had promised to preach on the morrow, and wanted the time to arrange my thoughts. As it was, I selected my subject, studied and arranged my plan, while at work in the canal. Early the next day—

Sunday—I stepped to the entrance of my brush arbor, and to a post driven into the ground, upon the top of which was nailed a chip, hewed flat for the purpose, which served for a reading-desk. My audience were already seated about, some upon rude stools, and most upon the ground.

This afternoon, our wall being completed, and two pens, twelve feet square, inclosed, we set our cradles, and commenced "rocking." The books of the treasurer exhibit the following results to Nov. 9th, when river mining was generally suspended for the season:

Oct.	8th	$50 00
“	9th	26 00
“	10th. Work upon the wing-dam.	
“	11th	155 25
“	12th	1,280 00
“	13th, Sunday	302 00
“	14th. Work upon the wing-dam.	
“	15th. “ “ “ “ “	
“	16th. “ “ “ “ “	
“	17th	1,404 00
“	18th	4,198 00
“	19th	894 00
“	20th, Sunday.	
“	21st	1,449 00
“	22d	688 00
“	23d	1,102 00
“	24th	1,034 00
“	25th	701 00
“	26th	27 50
“	27th, Sunday.	
	Carried over	$13,310 75

Brought over	$13,310 75
Oct. 28th	179 00
" 29th. Work upon the wing-dam.	
" 30th	6 00
" 31st. Work upon the wing-dam.	
Nov. 1st	297 25
" 2d	437 25
" 3d, Sunday.	
" 4th	949 10
" 5th	809 60
" 6th	168 00
" 7th	547 00
" 8th	380 00
" 9th	40 00
Total	$17,123 95
Deduct company expenses, viz., implements, labor, and incidentals,	3,528 05
Leaving in the treasury	$13,595 90

Dividend to each of twenty-one members of the company, $647 42. Average per day, from July 30th to Nov. 9th, 1850, $7 28.

A large amount of gold came into the treasury, the care of which was somewhat burdensome. It puzzled me to know what to do with it. There was no lock and key in the place. My arbor was upon the hill, retired from the rest of the settlement. There were many Mexicans and strangers constantly upon the bar, and it was dangerous to have a large amount of gold in possession. As a means of security for myself, I changed my quarters every night; and to secure the gold, I tied the various packages into one bundle, to which I attached one end of a string, tying the other end about my wrist. The bundle, so secured, I folded within my coat, placing the whole beneath my head as a pillow. Any attempt to take this from me would have been instantly detected.

It will be seen, by reference to the dates, that the company labored at mining on one Sabbath. When it was decided, at a meeting on Saturday, the 12th of October, to work the next day, I was allowed to enter my protest, which still remains upon the records; and I was also excused from manual labor. By noon of that Sunday, all had left work, and it was never even proposed again.

During the last weeks of our labors, we hired many Americans, and more than fifty Mexicans. The heavy tax upon foreigners has driven them to seek employment from companies. They may be hired at $4 and $6 a day. These Mexicans, who speak imperfect Spanish, are generally very indolent, and must be closely watched. Many times in the day, whatever may be the business, they will stop, take out a small, square piece of white paper, and putting upon it a small pinch of loose tobacco, roll it into a cigarito, and lighting it with a piece of punk or a match, smoke with apparent relish. The women are as fond of their cigaritos as the men.

A few nights before I left the mines, I accepted an invitation from "Red" to accompany him on a night fishing expedition. He carried in his hand a long and peculiarly pointed spear, with a spring barb, which opened as it entered the flesh of the fish, and prevented his escape. Several others bore torches made of light wood, which, while they dazzled the fish, showed the spear-man where to strike. After two hours' fishing on the banks of the river, we returned, rewarded for our toil with several large salmon.

A remarkable instance of an attack made by a bear upon the inmates of a tent occurred lately near us. He was no doubt attracted by the smell of the fresh meat which was being cooked. Infuriated by the resistance which he met, he made a most violent attack upon his assailants, killing two men and one woman, who was cooking. One of the men and the bear lay dead side by side.

A bird of very large size has frequently flown over us, soaring very high in the air, which we have supposed was the California eagle; but one, coming within the range of the rifle, was shot, and fell at our feet upon the bar. It proves to be a species of the vulture, and measures, between the tips of its wings, eight feet and eleven inches. The quill which I now have is of great size.

There was upon the bar a case of delirium tremens, that most fearful display of the Divine displeasure against intemperance. The young man was from England—had been an officer in the British army. Soon after he came to the mines, he gave himself up to intemperate habits. He was suddenly attacked in the night, imagining himself pursued by horrible fiends, which came to torture him. At midnight he came rushing into my tent, and almost knocked me out of my hammock as he crept under it, to conceal himself from his enemies. He would then dart through the side of my arbor, densely interwoven with brush and boughs, and into a tent near by, where he narrowly escaped being shot as a robber. In the day he would sit near the bank of the river, and converse by the hour with imaginary persons on the hill opposite. He carried on a curious courtship with a woman who was dancing over the river, surrounded by her fifty children. He requested me to marry him to this woman of his imagination; and then, soon after, came in trembling, and told me that the husband was alive, and in his jealous rage was seeking to kill him.

There was much sickness upon the bar during the latter part of the season. Much of this was the result of the fearful exposures to which we were subject. The sickness at length assumed a malignant and dangerous form. It commenced in a violent attack of diarrhœa, running into symptoms resembling the cholera, which was then fatally prevalent in the cities of California. The first person attacked was a vigorous and strong German sailor. Nothing could be learned of him or his friends—even his name was unknown to us. We buried him deep in the sand, on the banks of the Tuolumne; and while the burial services were being performed, a crowd—not, however, of our own members—surrounded the gambling-table on the bar. At this time there were three or four gambling companies with us, called into life by the short-lived success of our mining operations.

Poor Charlie! would it lessen the loneliness of your last resting-place to know that you "sleep your last sleep" bv the side of the gifted and noble-hearted friend who watched over you night and day in your sickness, and who thus contracted his own death malady? Alas! how sad and overpowering are my thoughts, as I stand, for the last time before leaving for my own far-distant home, by the grave of Franklin H. Ridout, of Annapolis, Maryland! Soon after the death of Charlie, he was prostrated by a most violent attack of the same disease. During his short sickness, every possible attention and assistance was rendered him by a few devoted friends; but how often he must have felt the want of the attentions of his own happy home—the home of piety and refinement! After he had received from his physician the intelligence that there was no hope in his case—intelligence to which he listened with Christian resignation—he sent for me. It was the 21st of October, and so warm and genial was the weather that the dying man was outside his tent, lying beneath its shade. That conversation, and others which followed, I shall never forget. I was the learner, and he the teacher. His quiet Christian resignment to the will of the Supreme Being, while it was very affecting, was also consoling to our feelings. But one thing he seemed to wish different. "If I might die at home," he said, "it would be so sweet!" The last sentence he spoke contained the dear and sacred name "mother!" His last thought was of her. A short time before his death, the sacrament of the holy communion was administered to him, at which a large number of persons were present. A meeting of the company was called in the evening, and the following resolutions were passed:

Whereas it has pleased Almighty God to take from among us a beloved friend and companion, therefore,

Resolved, 1st. That by the death of Franklin H. Ridout we have lost one whom we all esteemed most highly for his many virtues.

Resolved, 2d. That we sincerely sympathize with his afflicted mother and relatives in this sad bereavement.

Resolved, 3d. That we will attend his funeral to-morrow, at twelve o'clock, M.

Resolved, 4th. That this company will defray the expenses of his funeral.

Resolved, 5th. That a copy of these resolutions be sent to the family of the deceased; and that an invitation to attend the funeral be extended to the neighboring companies.

DANIEL B. WOODS, Secretary.

Hart's Bar, Oct. 21, 1849.

Several were dangerously ill at the time of Mr. Ridout's death, and, soon after, our worthy president was at once prostrated by a similar attack. For many hours we watched over him, endeavoring to cheer and comfort him. At the last, he came to the conclusion that he must die. Sending for me, he made me promise to visit his family on Red River, and be the bearer to them of the sad intelligence; also of many messages, which he delivered with the fortitude of a Christian philosopher; but once, when speaking of his wife, his voice was choked, and the strong man turned aside his head to weep. To my earnest entreaty that he would postpone the subject till he was better—indeed, my own feelings were so much overcome, that I feared I should lose control of myself in his presence—he replied that he must finish, and then his mind would be at rest. He feared not to die, but he would have desired to be at home, if it had been the will of God; but he could not complain. He gave me, for his family, his journal, a few articles of value, and his bag of gold. His tent, clothing, tools, &c., he gave to his servant, old Allen, to whom he had promised his freedom when he should leave the country, and to whom he requested me to give free papers in the event of his death. He told me, in conclusion, where he wished to be buried, and the mode of his burial. Hearing that my valued friend, Dr. Candee, of Park Place, New York, was in the neighborhood, I sent to him, urgently requesting him to visit Dr. Hotchkiss. To my great relief, he was soon at his side, and his prescriptions were blessed to his recovery.

These cases of sickness very much hastened the breaking up of our mining operations for the season. Many of the company left for the mountains, to be ready for the winter diggings.

Nov. 9th. This is my last day at the mines. We removed our cradles this morning to the portion of the channel from which we had taken out the largest amount of gold, hoping that we might find the vein again. There were favorable indications close under the centre wall; but the vein dipped below the wall, and we worked on, at every step undermining it, and still led on by the hope of reaching one of those rare deposits in which thousands are found. We were more encouraged in this idea by learning, on good evidence, that from one small spot near us, in the same channel, one miner, the last year, took $17,000. Why might not we strike it also? Every appearance encouraged us, when we were aroused by a sudden and loud call from one of the directors, who had discovered two leaks in the dam, a few feet apart. In an instant we all rushed, with our spades and barrows of dirt, to the breaches, which each moment gaped wider, and presented a more hopeless appearance. All our efforts would have been vain, and the dam swept away, but for the aid of another company near us. There was no more work, however, to be done that day, every thing being under the water. That was the last of my gold-digging.

Nov. 10th. For the last time, I have just climbed the mountain above Hart's Bar. On looking back, below me is spread out the narrow, winding valley, between its two mountains, widening at that point into an extensive bar, through which, on account of the many dams, canals, and other obstructions, the tortured river seems to have infinite difficulty in forcing its way. There is also the collection of tents, and the miners engaged in cooking, and collected in small groups about their camp-fires, for it is a cool morning. There stand the wrecks of our aqueduct and canal; the bare half channel of the river, and the surface of the bar scarred and pitted over. There is the scene of my labors for long months. There is my own arbor, and its last fire still smoking; and there our place of worship; and lower down is where our company meetings were held. And there are the graves of our lost companions. But I must break from these scenes of disappointment and sadness—of broken hopes and broken hearts—and, invoking the blessing of a kind and gracious Father in heaven upon myself and those left behind, direct my steps to San Francisco.

On the road, where before there were only tents or rude arbors, are now some frame buildings. And it was cause of surprise to see the great number of wagons and mule-trains, heavily laden for the mines. Where were to be found consumers for all this? Then came the news-man, with almost a mule-load of New York Heralds. I had come alone, and entirely unarmed, and it was a source of amusement to me to meet the emigrants on their way to the mines, completely armed. A mile out from Stockton, I met a Frenchman, armed with a double hunting-gun, pistols, dirk, &c., who came up to me, looking carefully on this side and on that, and inquired anxiously, "Is there any danger about the bear?" He seemed surprised when I told him I had come down from the mines alone and unarmed; that on my way across the plain I had seen a few elk and deer, and immense herds of antelope.

At Stockton I received letters from home of three months' later date; and the same evening left, in one of the river steamers, for San Francisco, where I arrived early the next morning.

CHAPTER VI.

SAN FRANCISCO.

GENERAL ESTIMATE OF GAINS—RETURN TO PHILADELPHIA.

San Francisco, which has already been several times burned down, and as often, Phœnix-like, arisen from its ashes, seems to be improved by each conflagration. A new edition, revised and improved, has just been issued. I should not have known the city. Indeed, there was little there—excepting the land, and that cut down and changed—which had been there when I left. The city of tents and sheds was changed to one of substantial edifices, while some blocks of very respectable brick houses had been built. One could not pass through the city without being impressed with the sentiment which seems to describe the whole thing, "*Enterprise run mad.*"* Each one of the vast throng hastens on, busy in his own plans and pursuits. Nothing can so well give the idea, by a single image, of San Francisco, as naming it a moral whirlpool. A mysterious, but all-pervading and powerful attraction, emanating from this wonderful point, has been felt in the remotest parts of the earth. Civilized, semi-barbarous, and savage —American, European, Asiatic, and African—feel it. The missionary and the gambler, the praying and the profane man, have all felt it. Drawn from the pulpit, the farm, the forum, the bench, they all rush—giddy, mazed—into this one vortex. Happy the few who escape unharmed!

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* The following anecdote will illustrate this sentiment. A foreigner of considerable wealth hastened with the crowd to California. After spending a few days in San Francisco, he left for home, without making an investment of his money. He remarked, in a letter to a friend, "As soon as you reach San Francisco you will think every one is crazy; and without great caution, you will be crazy yourself."

To give such a sketch of society in San Francisco as could be understood and appreciated—

> "To force it sit, till he has pencil'd off
> A faithful image of the form he views"—

would indeed be a difficult task. Every thing is in such a state of transition and change, from month to month, that a truthful description now would not be such one short year hence. When I first visited the city, the gamblers generally set their tables under large tents, which answered the purpose, also, of eating-rooms. In my second visit, these tents had given place to magnificent saloons. In these vast and splendid establishments, the mind was bewildered, the senses were fascinated. Appeals—almost irresistible to the young, often to the aged, and even to those who had ministered at the altar—were made, calculated to arouse the deepest and strongest passions of our nature. There was wine, and the more intoxicating eye of beauty, to kindle and to madden. There was music, by the most accomplished and able professors of the art, to captivate. There were paintings, such as my pen may not describe; and there were treasures of silver and gold, which *might* be theirs on the turn of a card.

In my third visit to the city, these saloons had been burned down, and replaced with others more splendid and attractive. The wine, the music, the tables of gold, coined and uncoined, are all there; but no longer do such excited and eager crowds throng around the tables. There are still some who are risking and losing their all; but, comparatively, they are few.

While at San Francisco, an unusual case of success in mining has been made public, and created much excitement even in this city of wonders—so much so as to show that such instances are very rare. Three miners had worked a claim, from which, in the course of a few weeks, they took $84,000. Their expenses for labor, provisions, &c., were about $24,000; But they had with them each about $20,000. I was informed that several hundred miners had been attracted to the same bar by the success of these men, but that no other rich deposits had been found, and, in general, the others were not making a living. Notwithstanding the overgrown fortunes which have been, in some few cases, so rapidly accumulated, I hazard the assertion that in no other part of the United States can there be found so many persons abjectly poor, in proportion to the population, as among those who have resorted to California for purposes of mining. Much is now said, and considerable excitement felt, on the subject of the quartz mining. When two exceptions are made, I know of no locations where the quartz-crushing operations can be at present successfully prosecuted. Two reasons may be given for this opinion. One is, the high price of labor; the second is, the difficulty of replacing parts of the machinery in case of a break. Many individuals and many companies will be losers by entering into the quartz mining speculations.

The mode of conducting business in the cities is anomalous. No skill in business transactions; no far-sighted, clear judgment; no long experience in matters of commerce, insure success here. It is much as it is at the mines. A happy hit, if made by the novice—and it is as likely to be made by him as by any—makes the poor man to-day a rich man to-morrow. In the spring of 1849, the single article of saleratus sold for $12 a lb.; it could be purchased in New York at 4 cents. One hundred dollars invested in this single article, deducting all expenses, would yield at the least $25,000. At that same time, building lots in Sacramento City were held at $500; in six weeks they brought $25,000. Let any one calculate for himself what would be the amount made from fifty lots at this rate. In the space of six months, the owner of $100 *might* be worth a million!

Such glittering and gilded castles as these, floating through the imaginations of thousands, led to those wild speculations in lumber, provisions, and other things, which, in the end, have come tumbling down upon the heads of the builders.

While at San Francisco I had opportunity of obtaining information respecting the companies which had been formed in the States. Not one of these, so far as I could learn, continued together; they were often dissolved before they reached the mines. And even if they held a charter, and were bound to each other under heavy liabilities, they soon fell to pieces on reaching the gold placers. One intelligent gentleman, who had enjoyed every opportunity for observation, related to me the history of the company with which he left New York. They numbered one hundred and forty-one members. One of this company made $15,000 by trading; another made $7000 in the same way. Two had made $6000; one as a tin manufacturer, the other by mining. Three had made $2000; two by mining and trading, and one by teaming. One had made $1500, and another $1000. Half the remainder made a living by mining, gambling, or trading, and the remainder have died.

Before I left the mines, I applied to the secretaries or other officers of mining companies upon the Tuolumne for statements respecting their operations during the past season. These were companies extending along the river a few miles both above and below Hart's Bar. Their operations were generally more successful than those of other damming companies, excepting, perhaps, some upon the Yuba River. I speak within bounds when I say that four out of five of the river damming operations, through the whole mines, were failures. The averages of the fourteen companies given below were generally obtained from their books. In some instances, their mining operations were continued after I left, but only in a limited degree, and, in general, were entirely suspended, and the members were scattering among the various winter diggings, or, in a few cases, seeking their distant homes.

No. 1.

Signorita Bar Company.

Worked by Green T. Martin, of Rodney, Miss., and R. N. Wood, of Shreveport, La

Total number of days, 1354.

Highest number of hands one day, 96.

Commenced on the 3d of September, and left on the 25th of October.

Total amount taken from bar, $9700.

Highest amount in one day, 7 lbs. 4 oz.

Length of dam, 290 feet.

Loss by rise of river in repairs, $1400.

$1000 taken out since we left. Our force was too large to be longer profitably employed. The upper part of the bar was poor, and on the west side the bed was black slate, with a deposit of three or four feet, and on the slate was found pieces of pine and other timber; and the whole had the appearance of ashes or ash-bed, the water upon it resembling soap-suds. All the specimens found contained greater or less quantities of quartz. R. N. Wood.

No. 2.

Stephens's Bar Damming and Mining Company.

Gross amount of gold taken out this year from Stephens's Bar Damming and Mining Company, $12,000.

October 26th, took out $1224.

Length of canal, 1200 yards.

Number of men in the company, 38.

Number of days' work put on by each member, 120.

Name of treasurer, Wm. Canfield, New York.

" " secretary, John F. Sullivan, Baltimore.

No. 3.

Items of the Third Bar Company, Tuolumne River.

Organized 25th July, 1850.

Number of members, private, 6.

J. W. Morrel, president.

C. Powell, secretary and treasurer.

Number of members, aggregate, 8.

" " Mexicans employed, average, 60.

" " days' labor, 4260.

Length of canal, 730 yards.

" " dam, 88 yards.

Cost of labor for day, $5 each Mexican.

Cost of labor, and other expenses, to complete the job, $239 48.

Amount of gold and other valuables obtained from the above labor, 00.

No. 4.

Philadelphia Company.

5 members; 210 days; amount of gold, 00.

No. 5.

Extension Company.

12 members; 1100 days.

Amount, $2250.

Average for day, $2 04.

No. 6.

Hawkins's Bar Company.

N. Kingsley, president; John Richardson, secretary; Geo. Goodhart, treasurer.

108 members.

Time of labor, 7776 days.

Amount of gold, $35,500.

Average for day, $4 56.

No. 7.

Ficket Company.

Robert Armstrong, treasurer.
14 members; 434 days.
Amount made, $4368.
Average for day, $10 06.

No. 8.

Payne's Bar Company.

20 members; 1820 days; amount, $6792.
Average for day, $3 73.

No. 9.

Grisly Company.

Geo. Buttress, president; D. F. Smyers, secretary and treasurer.
10 members; largest day's work, $2600.
Time of labor, 540 days.
Amount, $11,000.
Average for day, $20 37.

No. 10.

Wild Yankee Company.

15 members; time, 450 days; amount, $4000.
Average for day, $8 88.

No. 11.

Jacksonville Company.

Thos. Sayre, president; G. N. Harris, secretary; Geo. Somers, treasurer.
50 members; time of labor, 10,000 days.

Amount taken out, $10,900.
Average for day, $1 09.

No. 12.

Extension Company.

20 members; time, 720 days; avails, 00.

No. 13.

York Bar Company.

20 members; 714 days; avails, 00.

No. 14.

Hart's Bar Company.

Thos. S. Hotchkiss, president; Daniel B. Woods, secretary and treasurer.

Number of members, 21.
Largest day's work, $4198.
Number of days' labor, 1938.
Total amount, $17,123.
Average per day, $8 83.

Number of members in these fourteen companies, 344.

Total number of days' labor, 35,876, or 114 years of 313 working days each.

Total amount taken out, $113,633.

Average for each day's labor, $3 16.

My efforts to obtain averages of the winter mines were attended with much greater difficulty. But few of the miners kept any account of the results of their labors, and those who did were often unwilling that their names should appear in connection with such inconsiderable profits. In my journal I have the names of *fifty-six* miners, generally of my acquaintance, who were laboring in the richest portions of the mines, and who have given me information respecting their operations. All whose names and averages I took were industrious, persevering, and, in some cases, skillful miners, so that the result given must be regarded as one which presents the most favorable view. It is probable, if an average could by any means be obtained of all the operations of all the miners, day by day, it would be much less than that at which I arrive.

My estimate commences at the time I reached the Marepoosa diggings, which was the 12th day of November, 1849, and a few days after the rainy season commenced, and ends at the time I went to Jacksonville, April 3d, 1850, and covers a period of one hundred and twenty-one working days to each of fifty-six miners, or six thousand seven hundred and seventy-six days in the aggregate.

Number of miners, 56.
Length of time, 121 working days.
Total number of days' work, 6776.
Whole amount made, $22,089 76.
The aggregate amount each day, averaged, $182 56.
Average to each of 56 miners, each day, $3 26.

It would exhibit curious results were I prepared to present a statement of the mining operations of one hundred and twenty-nine miners with whom I have been connected since I came to California. Most of these left the mines before I did, some of them to return home, and many to engage in other pursuits. Some remained only a few days. One of these, though I was not connected with him otherwise than as being with him on a prospecting tour for a day, was a novelty among us. He seemed to have just turned out of Broadway, or to have been turned out of a band-box. He was an exquisite, even to the white kid gloves, eye-glass, and Cologne water, with dancing pumps, and a small gold box suspended about his neck by a gold chain, in which to put his gold. With his dirk-knife, elegantly chased, he would go into a hole already dug, and spend an hour in scraping the dirt from the rocks, which he washed with great care, putting the few scales in the gold box around his neck. He had been transplanted from some greenhouse to these rough mountains, and soon faded away and died.

Nov. 26th, 1850. We set sail in the French ship Chateaubriand, "homeward bound." On January 8th, 1851, reached Panama. After spending twenty days upon the Isthmus, on January 28th weighed anchor; had a rapid run, the Georgia putting into Havana for coal, and to part with a portion of her six hundred and fifty passengers; and on Saturday, February 8th, arrived at New York, and the same night at Philadelphia, after an absence of two years and eight days.

And now, as I take leave of my reader, he will find me seated again at my old writing-desk—the Christmas present of my dear pupils, some of whom have already called in to see me. How familiar it looks! And how light and cheerful every thing is, as if I had been shut up in a dark, close room *so long!* And how familiar and dear are all the scenes and faces of home, only grown older and larger! I imagine myself, only one moment, back at the top of the hill from which I last saw my companions. I think they were then looking miserable in the distance, and I think they still look and feel so now. If they could hear me, I would wish them soon that happiness which can make them forget that they have not come home with their weight in gold, though they may find that which is more than worth it, for there *are* treasures more valuable than gold.

CHAPTER VII.

HINTS TO MINERS.

The experience of sixteen months in the mines enables me to make a few suggestions which may be of importance to those intending to become miners.

And with regard to the preparations which should be made, a great error has been committed by most California emigrants, in making too much preparation. A change of substantial clothing, with several pairs of well-made water-proof boots, form a good outfit in that line. It is important, where so much work is to be done in the water, to wear flannel, even in the summer. It is attended with great inconvenience and much expense to transport a large chest or trunk from place to place. I have known many, on arriving at San Francisco, who sell off, at a great loss, the greatest part of all their stores, reducing them to one change of clothing. There is great risk, also, of losing one's effects by fire or by water, or by the breaking up of the establishment in which they are stored. The Amity and Enterprise Association, formed before we left Philadelphia, can speak knowingly upon this subject. Each individual of this association had an outfit which would have lasted three or four years. In addition, they had company property, in provisions, tents, mining utensils, &c., to a considerable amount. Most of this was sent around the Horn by several shipments. The rest we took with us to Tampico. When we reached this place, finding that the transportation across Mexico would be about $50 a hundred, we packed most of our individual property in a large box, and shipped it back to the States to be forwarded to California. This is the last we ever saw of its contents. Our provisions we sold at Tampico, which did not pay the custom-house duties upon them. Of those which were sent around the Horn, the provisions did not pay the freight and commissions on the sale; and most of our clothing, &c., were stored in San Francisco, and burned in the second great fire in that city. I do not know of a company which did not meet with losses in proportion to the extent of their outfits. The losses of those who crossed the plains in this respect were very great. Large quantities of valuable mining implements, hundreds of hams, bags of flour, and other provisions—even wagons, in large numbers—were left upon the road. It is often the case that persons suffer very seriously from their ignorance of the difficulties and expenses to which they will be liable after reaching Califorina. Many find themselves in San Francisco with cramped means, and sometimes none at all, and with a long and expensive journey to the mines before them, besides many necessary articles which should be procured. Every miner should have $150 by him on his arrival in the country. More would not be amiss.

I believe all who are at the mines would agree with me in recommending to the new miner to leave all machinery behind him. If he takes any thing in that line, let it be the best *mining pick* and *spade* he can find, with a stout sheath-knife, and a horn for crevassing. The "cradle" is found any where in the settlements or in the mines. If it is intended to engage in the quartz-crushing operations, the most simple machinery is the best. The very complicated and expensive machinery which has, in several instances, been taken to the mines, has been useless. The least breakage will delay the whole work for months, till it is replaced from the States.

By all means avoid companies which are got up at home for mining. Whatever facilities they offer; whatever array of influential names they present; whatever they purpose or promise to accomplish—if they come to you with a charter, or a ship, of which you are to share the advantages—*avoid companies formed at home!* They work badly; they cramp your energies; they entangle all your operations. In the mines, it will always be necessary for you to associate yourself with one or two, and sometimes with twenty, or even fifty mining companions. These associations are formed and terminate with the necessity of the occasion.

Much time is lost in the mines by those who are led, by exaggerated stories of success, from a place where they are working with some advantage, to seek a better location. Leave the work of prospecting, principally, to the more experienced miners. There is an excitement connected with the pursuit of gold which renders one restless and uneasy—ever hoping to do something better. The very uncertainty of the employment increases this tendency. A person may be making his quarter ounce a day, and hears that a person a few miles from him is making an ounce. He is accordingly dissatisfied, and removes to the new diggings, there, probably, to be again disappointed. These exaggerated stories are most generally got up by traders in the place, in order to bring customers to their stores. I have noticed that those who remain most constantly in one place are in the end most successful.

When you have marked off your claim upon a bar —a place which has been proved— *dig down to the rock!* Many have been losers by relinquishing their work before it is finished. The gold is generally scattered upon the primitive rock. All the rich deposits are here. You may dig over the quarter part of your claim and find little gold, while a parcel containing pounds may lie concealed in the last corner. A friend from Philadelphia, who marked off a claim at the Chinese diggings, dug it partly out, came to water, which disheartened him, and gave it up. Three miners went into it at once, and in a few hours had taken out $375. The necessity of perseverance in such an employment must be apparent to all. You can not hope to accomplish any thing without it. Your motto must be, "*Hope on, hope ever!*" The treasure you seek may lie at the bottom of your next claim —it may be beneath the next stone.

Be careful of your health! This once gone, your hopes are at an end. An unfortunate miner at the Marepoosa diggings, who had brought upon himself an attack of scurvy by the neglect of his health, said to me, during a visit made to him, "I would give all the gold of California, if I had it, for the health I had two weeks ago!" Fortunately, the supplies of provisions at the mines are better and more abundant than they were; and there will be yet greater improvement in this respect. Vegetables, of which we had none at first, are now regularly furnished. The great care should be, to guard against the influence of working in the water. To this you are necessarily exposed; and, from my observation on this point, the danger arising from this exposure may, in general, be safely met by the care the miner takes of himself in his hours of rest. It is not his being wet during the time of labor which is most likely to prove injurious, but his remaining so during the reaction which takes place in the system at the close of labor. As you value your health, then, do not enter upon your hour of rest at noon, and especially do not leave work at night, without throwing aside your wet garments and putting on dry ones. You will soon be aware of a great change which takes place in the temperature of the air, among the mountains, during every night of the year. You may lie down, wet and tired, at night, and perhaps not need a blanket, while before morning you will feel the need of two or three. It is not generally the most robust or vigorous who best stand the labor, the privations, or the exposure they are sure to meet. These seem the most liable to the many diseases of the country; and perhaps it is for the very reason that, trusting to their strength and vigor of constitution, they do not take the necessary care of their health.

There are many other points to which I might profitably call your attention, but respecting which experience will be your best teacher.

A few thoughts as to the various kinds of gold and gold-digging. (See the Appendix.) The gold deposits are found in the quartz and slate formations, in decomposed granite, in sand and gravel beds, and in clay. The largest specimens are found between the layers of slate over which the stream flows vertically. The rocks and soil are frequently volcanic, like those of Pompeii. Lumps of gold are often found alone, and are no indication of the existence of a rich deposit. But the scale and dust gold is not found in this detached state; it exists generally in veins, though sometimes much scattered through the soil by the action of the water.

The river diggings are sometimes upon the bars over which the stream has formerly run. These bars are covered with stones, which, with a portion of the soil below, must be removed, to the distance of several feet. When, by experiment, it is found to yield gold, the cradle is placed by the river side, and the dirt is washed through it, while the gold settles at the bottom of the machine. At the close of the work, this is washed down in pans, and then is dried in the sun or by the fire, and is still farther cleaned by blowing, by the magnet, or by quicksilver. The river diggings found in the channels require much more labor in the preparation, and must be worked by companies, sometimes of one hundred persons. A canal and dam must be made, to turn the water from the channel of the river. After that, the process is the same as the bar working. These constitute, generally, the summer diggings, as the rivers are low, and in a better state for being worked. The winter diggings are found among the ravines and gulches, and upon the plains where the streams have formerly run. These are dry in summer, and can only be worked after the rainy season commences. But the Mexicans and Chilinos have a method of "dry washing," or winnowing the gold-dirt, much as grains are winnowed, the dirt being blown away, and the gold falling into the blanket or skin. The dry diggings are sometimes worked during the dry season, and the dirt thrown up in heaps, to be washed out when there is water. If worked in the rainy season, the water must be turned by small dams and canals, leaving the channel and its banks dry. This kind of labor is very difficult, but often pays well. The other kind of dry digging is the most laborious of all. It is sometimes the case that very rich deposits are found upon the small plains lying between the mountains. The river which formerly ran here has been displaced by the soil, which accumulates to a great depth. The soil must be removed, sometimes to the depth of twenty, thirty, or even forty feet, before the gold is found. When found, it sometimes proves very rich, but more frequently very poor. I have seen a company of nine persons labor for two weeks, keeping down the water with pumps, and, after all their toil, not find a grain of gold to reward their efforts. It is truly one of the most discouraging circumstances in a miner's life, that, although he may one day make his pounds, the next he may make little or nothing. It is equally disheartening to him to be working all day for the merest trifle, while by his side, and within a few feet of him, another is taking out his pounds. But let him persevere, and success may be his reward.

The actual time favorable for mining during the year is very limited, the greater proportion of which is spent in preparations. Some of the river companies spent five, and one six months' time, in making their canal, dam, and other preparations for two months' mining, in September, October, and November. Much time is lost during the excessive heat of the dry and the storms of the rainy season, and more in the profitless, but arduous labor of *prospecting*. Then much time must be spent in removing, in purchasing provisions, in building houses, &c. If all the days of actual *mining* were set down, they would not, I think, amount to more than seventeen weeks in the year.

Much was anticipated, at the commencement of the last rainy season, from the use of the submarine armor in working the channels of the rivers. Much money was expended, and much time lost in making experiments, but to little advantage. In every instance where they were tried on the Tuolumne, they were soon abandoned as useless. The experiments tried near me were made by an old Georgia gold miner, and one who had been accustomed to the use of the submarine suit, which he had worn in recovering some treasures from a ship sunk in the Mississippi. But he never accomplished any thing with it at the mines. In addition to the cradle, which has been always in use in the mines, the North Carolina rocker and the Long Tom are used to advantage upon the placers where the gold is very fine. These are both, however, made on the same general principle as the simple cradle. The principal difference is, that they are larger and longer.

Before closing this chapter of miscellanies, I will endeavor to guard you against some moral evils—or I might better name them *immoral influences*—to which you will be exposed.

Why it is so, it is not my purpose now to inquire; but such is the fact, that in California there are circumstances which render vice very attractive and alluring, and which, unless resolutely resisted, draw the mind to become familiar with it, and in the end to embrace it. The man esteemed virtuous at home becomes profligate, the honest man dishonest, and the clergyman sometimes a profane gambler; while, on the contrary, the cases are not few of those who were idle or profligate at home, who come here to be reformed. It can not be known what influence such trials and temptations will exert upon the character till they are tried. If they are resisted, the character is strengthened; if they are not resisted, the propensity to vice is proportionally increased. But not only does vice seem more alluring here—it comes, from the very circumstances in which the miner is placed, to be a substitute for common amusement. He has not the society of the home circle to cheer and enliven him. Disheartened, often reduced to the depths of melancholy, he has no longer the friends—the innocent recreations to which he has been accustomed. On the Sabbath morning, no church is open for the sad and dispirited wanderer, self-exiled from his father's house! No mother, or sisters, or beloved wife can cheer him by their conversation and smiles. Is it to be wondered at, then, that in his gloom he listens to the voice of the Syren, and turns away to seek those broken cisterns which can hold no water? Do you not perceive that he is exposed to peculiar and great danger? But recollect, if the danger is great, so much greater is the virtue of overcoming it. If the trial is severe, so much stronger the energy and resolution which is requisite to vanquish it. And if the temptation is resisted, the moral principles are strengthened just in proportion to the degree of temptation. The young man who returns home from California untainted, and of whom it may be said,

"Among the faithless, faithful he,"

may ever after be trusted. He has been tried as gold is tried, and the trial has but served to exhibit the excellence of his character; and well may his friends esteem and love him more, even if he returns to them without an ounce of gold, than if he came home with his thousands with a ruined character.

As I entered one of the magnificent gambling saloons of San Francisco, and proceeded from one table to another, I saw, to my surprise, a young man, who had come from one of the most religious families in his native city, placing down his money upon the table. I stepped to his side. In a moment the card was turned, and a small amount of silver was added to that already in his hand. He looked anxiously at me, and said, "I would not have my mother know what I am doing for all the money in this room." "Why then do it?" I asked; "have you thought to what the first step may lead?" "But what can I do," he said, earnestly; "I came not here to gamble, but to find amusement; and can you tell me what other amusement is within my reach?" I think that was the first, and am sure it was the last time that my friend visited the saloons for the purpose of gambling. But it affords an illustration of the subject—the danger, in the absence of proper subjects of interest and amusement, of seeking these in wrong and sinful ways. Many a person in California becomes a professed gambler in consequence of taking the *first step* from desire of amusement. It can not be impressed upon your mind too deeply that the gambling table is the place of the greatest danger. It is one of the most ensnaring inventions of the great enemy of souls.

But how shall I speak of a kindred subject, so fraught with danger that numbers of our most gifted citizens have yielded themselves to it. I think *intemperance* may be named as, next to gambling, the most prevailing vice of California. They generally go hand in hand. In this country, where the common restraints are removed which formerly imposed a salutary check, this vice gains disgusting and dangerous prominence. All that it is in its secluded orgies, all that it becomes in its favorite haunts elsewhere, it is in California in open day. It blushes not to show itself in its most fearful forms even in the public streets. Many a poor miner, who becomes discouraged and sinks down into gloom, flies to strong drink as he would to a friend from whom he expects to receive relief. Occasionally, the Daguerreotype likenesses of dear friends at home, or the sight of the neglected Bible—(for most miners have both of these, almost their only treasures)—or the reception of a letter, the miner's only luxury, recalls him to his better self, puts new hopes, new resolutions, and new life into him. But gradually he yields the ground again; again he stands on slippery places, and soon he staggers into his grave, for soon does vice of every kind perfect its work here. *Licentiousness*, which is so destructive an evil in large cities in Europe and America, is found also in California, and there produces its bitter fruits. *Profanity*—a kind of its own; a bold, independent, and startling profanity—is far too common in the mines, as it is in the settlements. Several have told me that they have fallen into this habit unconsciously, and, in some instances, have asked, as an act of friendship, that I would aid them in correcting it. In one case, a company of young men from New England mutually pledged themselves to each other and to me to refrain from this habit. For the very reason that it is so insinuating, and creeps so gradually upon one, should it be more sedulously avoided. In my own case, I could perceive that the constant listening to profane language produced a familiarity which continually lessened the sense of repugnance it occasioned. This would have been more and more the case, had I not adopted an expedient, which, while it aimed at the good of others, had the effect to guard my own mind against the moral contagion. The expedient which I adopted was this: when I heard a profane oath, I accompanied it with a petition to Heaven in behalf of him who had uttered it.

No man, young or old, should go to California unless he has firmness of principle enough to resist, and forever hold at bay, all the vices of the country, in whatever disguise they may present themselves, and in however fascinating shapes they may appear.

If I were asked what was the state of religion in the mines, I could only say, it is in *no state*. There are many men there who maintain their integrity and their piety. If there is preaching, it is well and respectfully attended. Many, perhaps most, occasionally read their Bibles or tracts. There is a respect for religion, as there is a respect for every thing which reminds one of home; but society must be in a very different condition—it must be settled, and have some elements of permanence—before a decidedly religious influence can be brought to bear upon it. When I say that the sound of the pick, spade, and rocker are seldom heard on the Sabbath—that the Bible is often and devoutly read—that often, from beneath some cluster of trees, the cheering sound of some hymn and the preacher's voice are heard, it is as much as can be said.

As to the operation of the laws at the mines, and their effects upon the interests of the community, I can only give the facts in the case, without discussing the subject. When we first reached the gold diggings, life and property were comparatively secure. Without law, except the law of honor; without restraint, except that imposed by the fear of summary punishment, which was sure to follow the only crimes cognizable under the new code—those of *stealing* and of *murder*—we were comparatively safe. If the "way of the transgressor was hard," it was also speedily terminated. It was the reign of the rifle and the halter. And yet this was a people who had been accustomed to the laws of civilized countries, and who yet loved order. The principles of a republican government were only adapting themselves to a new and untried emergency. The crime was committed, and proved in the presence of a competent and impartial jury, who were also required to award the punishment. The sentence was pronounced by the alcalde, a grave was dug, the sharp crack of the rifle was heard, the body was buried, and every man proceeded silently to his own work. I have never yet heard of the case in which the verdict given under the first system was an unrighteous one, or the punishment inflicted undeserved.

But a change came; civil laws were enacted in the mines; and what was the result? Why, crimes of every kind were committed, and the very officers of justice were met by the taunt, "Catch me, if you can!" Seldom was the criminal caught; and when caught, more seldom was he brought to punishment. And there is but one opinion among the miners, that the system *without civil law, but with summary justice*, is, *in the state of society which now exists* in California, incomparably better than the system *with such law, but without justice.*

Ere long, California will have a truly *golden age*, when *law and justice, and every moral and Christian virtue* shall prevail.

APPENDIX.

I give extracts from a letter which was written by Rev. Dr. Hitchcock, president of Amherst College, as containing some valuable hints to the miner. The reader will be struck by the accuracy of the opinions so early expressed, and which correspond so exactly with the facts since developed. It will be considered that Dr. Hitchcock could not then have seen even the first official report from the Mint, as it was some time after the receipt of his letter that the author had the pleasure of hearing Dr. Patterson read that report in manuscript. The first deposit of gold was made at the Mint December 8th, and the letter is dated December 25th, 1848.

To the Rev. Daniel B. Woods.

Dear Sir,—I believe that in almost every case gold mines that are worked occur in loose soil, sand and gravel, where the gold is in grains, and has been washed out of the rocks. Such is the case in the Uralian Mountains and Siberia, where I believe that not one mine is worked in the solid rocks, although some veins are known. I should not, therefore, search for veins in the mountains, but try to find the best spots on the banks of rivers. Success must depend much, indeed, upon chance, though practice doubtless would afford some marks that would be of service. If you should find veins in the rocks, I doubt whether they would be profitable to work. I have a strong suspicion that gold will be found all along the western part of our Continent; perhaps through the whole of California and Oregon; for I suspect that this is the eastern side of a vast gold deposit in Asia, reaching as far west as the Uralian Mountains. If this opinion would increase the gold fever, I think you had better not mention it. It may not prove true.

I hope you will improve your health, if not your fortunes, by this voyage. Let your expectations of success in gold-digging be moderate, and then I think the jaunt will do you good. That God's providence may be over you is the wish and prayer of

Yours respectfully and sincerely,
Edward Hitchcock.

Amherst, December 25th, 1848.

P.S.—Magnetic iron sand is an almost invariable attendant of good deposits of gold, and I should not be very sanguine of finding good deposits when this is wanting.

Letter from Geo. F. Dunning, Esq., Clerk in the Mint of the United States.

MINT OF THE UNITED STATES,
Philadelphia, June 18, 1851.

DEAR SIR,—In compliance with your request, I proceed to give you some information respecting the Mint establishment, and the terms upon which it receives bullion for coinage. You are doubtless correct in supposing that much misapprehension exists both as to the character of the establishment and the routine of its business. Within the limits of a letter, I can, of course, do little else than notice briefly a few prominent subjects.

A uniform and reliable currency being a national benefit, our government regards the support of the Mint establishment as properly a national expense. Any person may bring his bullion to the Mint, and have it converted into coin without charge. Many well-informed persons suppose that all the coinage of the Mint is for government account. On the contrary, the bullion is all deposited by individuals, and is coined for them. Government simply receives the bullion, ascertains its value, converts it all to a uniform standard, shapes it into coins, and puts a stamp upon it that shall give assurance of its value. From the coins thus made, each depositor is paid the exact value of his bullion.

The term *bullion*, as used at the Mint, includes all gold and silver, whether in the shape of bars, lumps, grains, plate, or foreign coins. All these varieties of bullion are received at the Mint for coinage, but no deposit is received of less value than one hundred dollars.

The *weights* used at the Mint are Troy weights, and they are always expressed in ounces and decimals of an ounce. Thus, 18 oz. 15 dwt. is written 18·15 oz.

The *fineness* of bullion is expressed in thousandths. The standard of our coins, as fixed by law, is 900 thousandths; that is, in 1000 ounces of coin, 900 ounces must be pure metal, and 100 alloy. The fineness of deposits is similarly expressed. Thus, 860 thousandths fine signifies that of a given weight (of gold, for instance) 860 thousandth parts are pure gold, and the remainder (140 thousandths) some other metal.

When bullion is left at the Mint for coinage, a receipt is given to the depositor, bearing the date and number of the deposit as entered in the weigh-book, and made payable to him or his order. In this receipt, of course, only the weight of the bullion before melting can be stated; its value depends upon its weight after melting, and its fineness, which is to be subsequently determined by assay.

Each deposit is separately assayed and reported upon by the assayer. Its value is then calculated, and a detailed memorandum prepared, exhibiting the number, date, depositor's name, kind of bullion, weights before and after melting, fineness, silver parted (if the deposit is gold), value of the gold, value of silver parted, deductions, and net value payable to the depositor. This memorandum is given to the depositor with his coin. Deposits are assayed, calculated, and ready for payment generally within a week after they are made; and they are paid on the surrender of the original Mint receipt.

I have said that the Mint makes no charge for converting bullion into coin. This is strictly true; but, inasmuch as depositors will frequently find by their "memorandums" that certain deductions have been made by the Mint from the proceeds of their bullion, some farther explanations are required. A miller who should grind wheat and corn without taking *toll*, would be correctly said to grind without charge. And if a farmer should carry his wheat in the sheaf, or his corn in the ear, or corn and wheat mixed together in the same bag, he would hardly object to pay the miller for thrashing, shelling, or separating. If a depositor brings to the Mint bullion "fit for coinage," that is, of standard fineness and properly alloyed, he will receive in return an equal weight of coins, without charge or deduction of any kind. If, however, his bullion requires *refining*, *alloying*, *toughening*, or *separating*, to make it "fit for coinage," this preliminary expense, carefully determined by experience, is deducted from the proceeds of the deposit.

The discovery of the California mines has suddenly increased the deposits at the Mint from five or six millions of dollars annually to thirty or forty millions. The whole amount received at the Mint and branches, from December, 1848, to this date, is about sixty-six millions of dollars. Of this, about twenty-four millions belong to the present year.

The fineness of California gold ranges from about 825 to 950 thousandths. The bulk of them, however, are between 870 and 900, the average being about 884. At this fineness, if entirely free from dirt, an ounce of gold, with the silver contained (deducting Mint charges), is $18 34. There is usually present in California gold a portion of dirt, averaging five or six per cent. of the weight. Five per cent. of dirt would reduce the average value given above to $17 42.

The gold of California contains usually about eleven per cent. of silver. This silver is separated for the benefit of the depositor, when the amount contained in the deposit is sufficiently large to pay the expense of separating, and yield a surplus of at least five dollars. If the surplus is less than this, the depositor receives no benefit from it, the law requiring that it shall accrue to the Mint, and be used for paying ordinary expenses. It is therefore for the interest of depositors to make their deposits sufficiently large to secure the silver contained. At the average fineness of 884, this would require from 75 to 80 ounces.

For more complete information on this subject, your readers may be referred to a small work entitled "New Varieties of Coins and Bullion, &c., by J. R. Eckfeldt and W. E. Du Bois, Assayers of the Mint, 1850," and to a pamphlet entitled "Guide to the Value of California Gold, by Geo. W. Edelman, U. S. Mint, 1850."

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

GEO. F. DUNNING.

Rev. Daniel B. Woods, Philadelphia.

P.S.—The following rules for making calculations of weight and value may not be unacceptable to the readers of your book.

1. *To convert Pounds Avoirdupois to Ounces Troy.*—From the avoirdupois weight, expressed in pounds and decimals of a pound, subtract one eighth. Divide the sum thus obtained by ·06, and the quotient will be the Troy weight in ounces and decimals.

2. *To convert Ounces Troy to Pounds Avoirdupois.*—Multiply the Troy weight in ounces and decimals by ·06. To this product add its seventh, and you have the avoirdupois weight in pounds and decimals.

3. *To find the Standard Weight of Gold or Silver, the gross weight and fineness being given.*—Multiply the gross weight, in Troy ounces and decimals, by the fineness in thousandths, and divide the sum by 900. The quotient will be the standard weight in ounces and decimals.

4. *To find the Value of Gold and Silver.*—GOLD. Multiply the standard weight, in Troy ounces and decimals, by 800, and divide the product by 43. The quotient is the value in dollars and cents.

SILVER. To the standard weight, in Troy ounces and decimals, add its one eleventh part, and eight tenths of one eleventh. The sum will be the value in dollars and cents.

5. *To convert the fineness expressed in Carats into Thousandths.*—Multiply the carats by 41⅔. The product is the equivalent fineness in thousandths.

Since the completion of my work, I have received from Col. J. J. Abert, of Washington, the Report of P. T. Tyson, Esq., presented to the Senate of the United States by the Secretary of War.

Although it is too late to avail myself of the valuable information contained in this report from one who has made a thorough and scientific reconnoissance of the mineral and vegetable wealth, the climate and agriculture of California, I am induced to present a few extracts, which refer more immediately to the mines. It was a source of much gratification to find the views and statements I have given so fully corroborated by this report.

It will be noticed that the averages of the daily profits of the miners arrived at by Mr. Tyson, as the result of careful observation, differs but a trifle from the averages given in this volume. In his article upon the gold regions, he writes:

"Although a large amount of gold has been collected in California within the past eighteen or twenty months" (he writes at the close of 1849), "yet, considering the number of persons engaged in digging for it, the average amount to each is far less than is generally supposed. This conclusion is forced upon the mind irresistibly, when the results of the actual experience of a large number of the operators are taken into consideration.

"The newspapers frequently relate instances of the return of individuals with considerable sums of gold. Many of these are much overrated, and the far greater number obtained it by other means than digging with their own hands—one portion by honest trading; but much of the hard-earned treasure in the hands of returned individuals has been borne off in triumph, and brought home as the spoils of the conqueror, in contests where honor belongs to neither winner nor loser.

"Representations from and about California are to be received with many grains of allowance. The preternatural excitement which has been produced by divers causes, in some cases to promote individual benefit, has really impaired to a large extent the faculty of seeing things as they would otherwise have been viewed. And there is yet no prospect of an end to this state of things, because, as soon as the public mind begins to recover from the effects of previous causes of undue excitement, additional ones are presented in the shape of most exaggerated accounts of golden discoveries. Whether the public good will be promoted by this state of things may well be doubted. A reference to *some* of these causes it is proper to give.

"It is the interest of the numerous traders within the gold region to collect around them as many diggers as possible, and each is very naturally induced to regard favorably the diggings of his own vicinity, and takes means to spread accounts of its richness. Wonderful stories are circulated, in some instances, to increase the population at a particular spot; and when the diggers flock to it, they often find it no better than the one they left, and sometimes less productive. A very large proportion of those persons we saw in the gold region were *in transitu;* and, upon inquiry, we learned from them usually that the place they had left was unproductive, and they were bound for another which they had *heard* was producing very largely; and on the same day, perhaps, would be seen other parties *prospecting*, as they term it, or looking for better diggings than the poor ones they had left, and in many cases just from the reported *good diggings* the first party were going to. At some of these places you would hear of some one being very fortunate, and that they averaged per day a half ounce, one, two, or three ounces; but, like the tariff for postage, they never appear to get 1½, 2½, 3½, and so on. These accounts from particular spots sometimes find their way into California papers, and from them are copied and spread far and wide at home. Notwithstanding all this waste of time, and that nine out of ten who left their homes under erroneous expectations in reference to the facility with which the gold could be had, have been cruelly disappointed, yet the extent and number of the ravines containing gold is such that the *large number* of diggers have, in the aggregate, produced a considerable amount of this metal.

"It is impossible to ascertain the amount of labor there has been required, or, in other words, the average number who have worked at the diggings, and the number of days' work of each. * * If we suppose only ten thousand to have worked steadily during three hundred days out of about six hundred since the digging began, and suppose each to have gained an average amount of $3 per day, the aggregate would amount to $9,000,000, being very much more than the whole amount exported in *every way* from California up to the first December last, to all countries, Oregon inclusive. As the cost of living fully equals $3 per day, it would appear that gold-digging is not as good as laboring at home, where the laborer can save something. * *

"Many of our citizens hastened to California during the past year in consequence of the numerous exaggerated, one-sided stories which were circulated in reference to the facility with which gold could be gathered. They had been told of various individuals who had collected large sums; a *few* had done so; but the experience of the *many*, who did not pay expenses by gold-digging alone, from the nature of the case, is far less likely to be known.

"As with *lotteries*, the *few* who draw large prizes become subjects of conversation; but nothing is heard of the *many* who draw blanks, or prizes too small to pay the cost of the tickets. * * *

"Divesting the newspaper accounts from California of certain expressions bordering rather too much upon the hyperbolic order, they amount to the fact that the outcrops of certain veins"—of gold-bearing quartz—"have been removed. Such expressions might have materially increased *the fever* but for the frequency of similar causes, which at length but slightly affect the body politic, because, like the body corporate in certain cases, it is becoming *acclimated*. Some of the expressions alluded to, and copied from California papers into our own, about '*gold-bearing quartz said to be found in inexhaustible masses or quarries through the whole mountainous region which forms the western slope of the Sierra Nevada*,' and '*these quartz mountain quarries*, and divers others, are indicative of a state of aurimania. Accounts are also given of the yield of gold said to be averages of these great *gold* '*quarries*.' That the specimens from which the gold was extracted contained the stated proportions is most likely, but that is a very different affair from the *average* rate of productions of a vein."

THE END.

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